

# The Musical Times

AND SINGING-CLASS CIRCULAR

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## THE DRAMATISATION OF CHORAL WORKS: A TALK WITH THE PRODUCER OF 'HIAWATHA'

BY HARVEY GRACE

The success achieved by the dramatised version of 'Hiawatha' at the Royal Albert Hall during the past few years has no doubt set many musicians speculating as to how far the process may be applied to choral works in general. Exception may be taken (and with good cause) to an analogous treatment of instrumental music on the ground that it involves the imposition of an idea or interpretation undreamt of by the composer. The objection does not apply to the dramatisation of choral music, because the text makes it an implicit dramatic work. The dramatist has to justify, not the process, but his choice of work and method of treatment.

With a view to obtaining light on some interesting questions that arise, I have interviewed Mr. T. C. Fairbairn, who was primarily responsible for the production of 'Hiawatha.'

I began by asking him as to the origin of his treatment of Coleridge-Taylor's popular work.

'It began in this way,' he replied. 'I had just finished producing the "Ring," for Denhof, in 1911, and was looking round for something for a big variety house. I had been thinking for a long time about the possibilities of "Hiawatha's Wedding-Feast" when I met the composer at the house of Julian Henry, the baritone who had sung the title rôle many times. Coleridge-Taylor was greatly interested in the idea, but the project came to nothing at the time. This was in 1912. During 1920, after my Surrey Theatre season of opera, I produced in the arena of the Albert Hall, "Cavalleria Rusticana" and the bigger scenes from Gounod's "Faust." This was the first time that the Albert Hall had been used in such a way and for such a purpose.'

'What followed this venture?'

'I was about to give, for the benefit of the Japanese Earthquake Fund, a performance in the same way and at the same place, of the

whole of "Faust," when I enlisted the services of Mr. Sherwood Foster for the business-organisation. This performance did not materialise, but Mr. Foster asked me if I would produce something in aid of the National Institute for the Blind. This I agreed to do, and as the Royal Choral Society was going to co-operate, I had of course to choose something from its répertoire. There were three of such works that I had already planned to do at some time or other—"Hiawatha," "Elijah," and "The Messiah." Finally it was decided to do "Hiawatha." As might be supposed, some people objected. I was told that the work was not written for the stage, and could not be produced that way. It was also suggested the Royal Choral Society could not sing without copies. This latter point was very quickly settled by the assurance of the Royal Choral Society officials and singers that they *could* sing from memory.

'One of the first and greatest difficulties was the enormous space that had to be covered by the backcloth—about 10,000 ft. The question of the weight was also important—so much so that we had to consult the architects as to the strain on the building. There was a further problem as to how to get this enormous sheet into position. The cloth was eventually placed in position by taping it on to a batten and hauled up by numerous pulleys, to another pliable hanging batten suspended from the roof supports. Mr. Palmer, of Barkers, was responsible for this, and a very talented scenic artist, Mr. Vincent, was the painter of the scenery. The choice of material was decided largely by the weight problem I have already mentioned. We finally decided to use blue casement cloth. This solved two difficulties: the material is very light, and owing to its colour very little paint was necessary, so we saved weight in that respect as well. When you have 10,000-ft. of surface to deal with, paint is literally a very heavy item! A scenic feature that caused a good deal of comment was the waterfall. "What became of the water?" people asked. Your readers may be interested to know that the waterfall discharged into a narrow stream that runs beneath the Albert Hall—one of London's many underground, long-forgotten rivers. The lighting was another feature remarked on. We used six lights, each of a million candle-power.'

'How did the rank and file of the Royal Choral Society take to the idea of becoming actors as well as singers?' I asked. 'And how did they face the heavy demands of a fortnight's run?'



T. C. FAIRBAIRN

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'From the very first rehearsal they were enthusiastic,' replied Mr. Fairbairn. 'And so far from finding it a bore to "make up" and perform daily for a fortnight, they wished the run had been longer! Here I must pay a warm tribute to the energy and organising ability of Mr. Rothery, the Secretary, and to Dr. Malcolm Sargent for his masterly control of the multitude of performers. As to this question of run, I go so far as to suggest that further productions should be continuous—at all events during the winter—and that the membership of the Royal Choral Society should be increased for the purpose up to anything from two thousand to five thousand. The singers should be divided into

attractiveness from the box-office point of view, the success of "Hiawatha" is sufficient proof. If this decentralised scheme were run with low charges of admission, the cinema would be up against a bigger rival than it has had so far. How could the ordinary "talkie" compete with such a show as "Hiawatha," which comprises speech, singing, acting, and dancing ?'

Reverting to the broadcasting suggestion, I asked Mr. Fairbairn if performances of this kind would make good fare for listeners. Wouldn't they appeal to the eye rather than to the ear?

'No,' said Mr. Fairbairn; 'the broadcasts of opera are some of the best things the B.B.C.



THE MEDICINE MAN

sections, each learning a different work, so that they could rest in turn. Six different works could thus be performed, with six different companies working in rotation. And such productions should not be confined to the Albert Hall; I should like to see them given also at the Alexandra Palace, People's Palace, and Crystal Palace, so that the four quarters of London could have a constant musical spectacle. The performances should be broadcast. The income of the B.B.C. would be largely increased by such attractive fare. Such a scheme would provide thousands of people with an outlet for their artistic energy as actors, singers, and dancers. As to the

has done. The Commentary from Savoy Hill and the publication of the libretti in cheap form make things easy for the listener. Moreover, the choral works that would be performed in the way I suggest are already popular, and their stories are, in fact, far better known and less complicated than those of most operas. The wireless listener who can visualise the scenic part of an opera wouldn't be at a loss with a dramatised choral work.'

'Can "Hiawatha" be done elsewhere?' I asked.

'Certainly,' said Mr. Fairbairn. 'It can be done wherever there is a suitable hall. The ideal would be a natural outdoor amphitheatre

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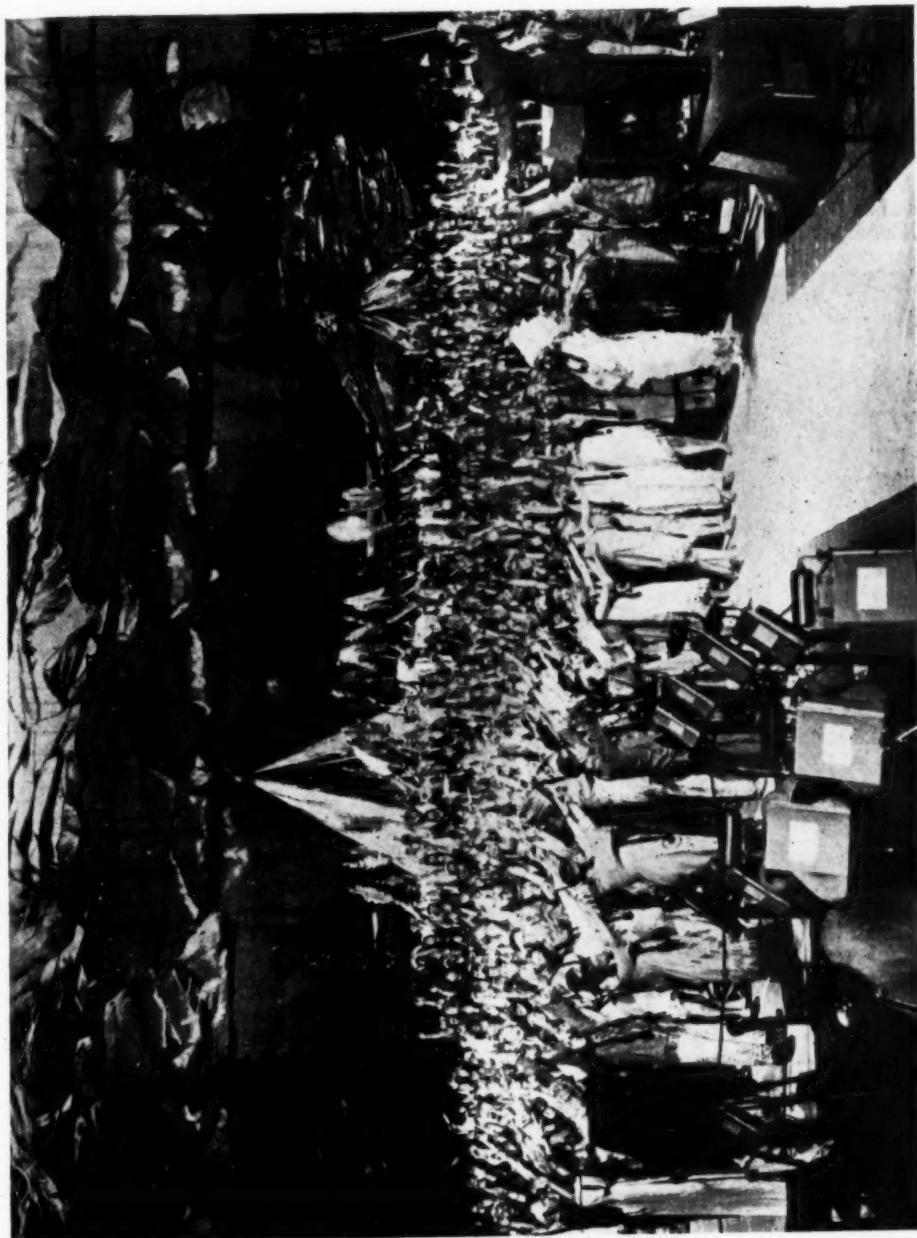
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'O PAU-PUK-KEEWS, DANCE FOR US YOUR MERRY DANCES!'

with some water and trees adjacent, and also in the neighbourhood of a hall to which the performance could be transferred in bad weather.'

'Is it the case that you have been asked to take the production to America?'

'I have had three offers from the U.S.A. One prominent American impresario wished to take the production on tour to about thirty different towns. I have also had an offer to produce "Hiawatha" at the Niagara Falls—on the American side of the Falls, that is.'

(I ventured to suggest that the Canadian side would be even better, as Canada is well provided with large and efficient choral societies.)

Mr. Fairbairn went on to say that offers are not limited to English-speaking countries. 'I

in Egypt," "The Golden Legend," and "The Messiah." These are all ready for production. We have also prepared a dramatic presentation of a programme of well-known Christmas carols. There is no lack of material.'

A point that will naturally occur to the reader is the possible effect of a dramatised performance on the actual singing of the choir. With this in mind, I mentioned that at the Albert Hall this year I speculated as to how far the brilliant singing of the Royal Choral Society may have been due to the fact that the method of presentation made the text more vital to them.

'That is so,' said Mr. Fairbairn. 'The greatly increased sense of reality helps singers enormously. With copies in their hands they are



THE BALLET OF THE HAPPY HUNTING-GROUND

have been approached by a manager who wants to do it at Budapest, Vienna, and Berlin.'

'Does this mean that you would take an English chorus?'

'No,' said Mr. Fairbairn, 'a German version of the "Wedding-Feast" already exists; the other two parts would have to be translated. The Budapest performances would, of course, involve a Hungarian text.'

I suggested that there must be other works that would lend themselves well to this method of presentation.

'Yes,' said Mr. Fairbairn. 'I have already arranged "Elijah," "Judas Maccabaeus," "Israel

apt to be merely reading, so far as the words are concerned. With the whole work memorised and with the singers taking their part in the acting, words and music are vitalised in a way that is hardly possible—or rarely met with—in "straight" choral performances.'

What has Mr. Fairbairn's method to do with choral societies, especially in small centres? The answer is suggested by the difficulties under which they are working to-day. Let us summarise these difficulties: Choral societies are not attracting members—especially young members—or audiences as they did twenty years

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ago. It is not that people are less fond of music, but that the taste of to-day, influenced by the cinema and by profusely illustrated daily journals, demands something with movement, drama, and colour. A partial response to this demand is made by an occasional concert performance of an opera, but in most works of the kind the chorus music does not interest the singers for long, nor is it sufficiently difficult or well-written to do them any good technically. The Festival movement has brought into existence a large number of choirs, especially in villages and country towns. These choirs—many of them excellent in quality—can hardly continue to exist either musically or financially on a few part-songs prepared for competitive purposes; and a substantial choral work, it is found, rarely attracts a full hall.

Side by side with these hard facts put this other one—that amateur operatic societies are everywhere on the increase, and are steadily attracting performers and audiences who in pre-war days would have been the mainstay of local choralism. Amateur opera is good fun, but from a purely musical point of view it cannot be compared with choral singing, which has always been, and still is, England's strong suit. The operatic society is a welcome addition to the choral society, but artistically it can never be a substitute.

A suggestion that choral societies should adopt and adapt the Fairbairn idea will cause some of the old brigade to raise pained and astonished eyebrows. (A few years ago my own eyebrows would have been raised as high as anybody's.) But changed conditions call for changed methods, or at least for a frank discussion of them. And if it is permissible to give a concert performance of an opera, why should we not give an operatic version of a cantata? Further conversation with Mr. Fairbairn has convinced me that his method of presenting choral works can be applied by any normally well-equipped choir that has behind it energy and enterprise. It would be a mistake to suppose that the Albert Hall 'Hiawatha' is the only possible way. That real waterfall, those million-candle-power lights, the impressive back-cloth, and other effects, striking as they were, did not make the phenomenal success of 'Hiawatha.' The prime factor was the chorus. Any choral society that can memorise a work and achieve a diction both clear and significant, has already the chief essentials towards a successful dramatised version. As for producer: there are few districts without some person experienced in amateur theatricals. Costumes? A small sub-committee with gumption and neat, contriving fingers can do wonders at very little cost. The innumerable pageants given about twenty years ago up and down the country—many are being given at the present time—showed that in every district there is no lack of people with a natural

gift for dealing with the various sides of dramatic production. Fairbairnised choralism would attract as helpers many non-singing but useful folk of this kind. Choral societies who find the normal methods still profitable will wisely stick to them. The rest will no less wisely consider the moral of Mr. Fairbairn's version of 'Hiawatha,' especially as (the fact must be insisted on) dramatised choralism leads, not to worse singing, but to *better*. The half-learned, unconvincing, one-eye-on-the-copy-all-the-time variety won't do. It was good enough for the ordinary concert—on second thoughts, though, was it? Could we but know, we should probably find that it was largely responsible for the dwindling support of which choral societies complain. They must try to recover that support; and if choralism of the penny-plain type won't do it, they must be prepared to try the tuppence-coloured variety.

#### RHYTHM IN SINGING, AND ELSEWHERE

BY W. S. DREW

(Concluded from July number, p. 600)

The desire to keep a song moving in a particular way is no doubt the outcome of a certain artistic insight, but the power to bring this desire to fruition is the result, as in other forms of artistic achievement, of technique. The technical secret of such masters of rhythmical singing as Plunket Greene and Sir Harry Lauder lies in a special kind of neatness of the diction muscles which enables awkward combinations of consonants to be articulated rapidly and clearly, and so permits the following vowel sounds to be placed with the greatest accuracy 'on the beat.' In unaccompanied singing the beats of the bar are indicated to the listener by the incidence of the vowels. To borrow a metaphor from the parade ground—the consonants are purely cautionary, the word of command is the vowel.

For the unvoiced consonants and their combinations (*p*, *t*, *k*, *st*, &c.) the necessity for anticipation introduces no complications other than a nice adjustment of the anticipation or suspense to the strength of the emphasis required.\* But the continuants (*l*, *m*, *n*, *v*, &c.) introduce questions of pitch or intonation which have to be considered carefully. For if these sounds have to be sung before the note to which they are apparently written it is obviously necessary to decide exactly what is the pitch of the note on which they must be sung. Many singers whose rhythmical and dramatic instincts are perfectly sound spoil the style of their singing by not definitely deciding this question for themselves; in fact, a good many of them do not seem to know even that there is a question to decide. In any case the result is a blurred, scooping attack. This is a

\* Emphatic speech depends largely upon this delay of an expected syllable.

blemish which is very prevalent among opera singers. It is very disfiguring and quite unnecessary, for the dramatic emphasis which it is designed to effect can be produced more satisfactorily by a much cleaner style of intonation.

There are two ways in which this can be done: either by singing the initial continuant on the same note as the following vowel, or by singing it on a lower note, which note may itself be either the note of the preceding syllable or one which fits in with the harmony of the preceding beat:

In Ex. 9 it looks curious to write the 'R' to a D sharp, but none the less it is the best way to start the phrase if a clean and effective emphasis is required. All these attacks can of course be done on the same note as the first of the following bar, but if a really telling emphasis is wanted, the attacks suggested are best, as anyone may find by trying the various alternatives. In each case the jump should be a clean one, with no intermediate notes. What this all amounts to is that when great emphasis is required it is not only allowable but actually necessary to sing such sounds on a lower note. It should be pointed out also that the notation should be taken literally,<sup>†</sup> i.e., the anticipated attack should be on *a note*, not a rapidly ascending scale of notes. Certain plaintive and legitimately sentimental effects can be got by this last method, but it requires much skill and delicacy to make it tolerable, and its effect fades very rapidly with the frequency of its use.

The other occasions on which singers are misled by musical notation are those that are connected with the taking of breath. When there are a few bars of instrumental prelude or

interlude there is obviously no excuse for the singer who does not realise that he must fill his lungs a beat or two before the time that the instrumental rhythm has fixed for him to begin. Apart from this, however, composers seem to take a malicious delight in misleading the unwary beginner by indicating that the sound is to be continuous when, indeed, it is obvious that a breath must be taken. Some composers or editors go so far as to prolong a note by a dot in the musical notation and then to contradict it by writing a comma for a breath.

No one thinks it necessary to tell a child to fill his lungs before he begins to howl; nor, at a later date in his life, to point out that there must be air in the lungs before he begins to speak. Thus everyone really knows the rule for breathing during a song, namely, that a breath must be taken before a *verbal* phrase is started. If the composer writes his musical phrases so that this is difficult or impossible, so much the worse for the composer, for even the most amphibious of singers has to come up to breathe occasionally. In this connection, however, even the best of composers have to be edited to some extent, and it is true also that great song-writers vary considerably in what may be called the instinct for verbal phrasing.\*

Since rhythmical 'landmarks' are defined by the *incidence* of the note, it follows that in this connection its duration is of minor importance; i.e., one may play a waltz measure either *sostenuto* or *staccato* without disturbing the dancing. From which it follows again that this editing for breathing purposes consists in cutting short the duration of the last note of a phrase so that the first note of the next one may not be late. Often there is no time to do more than just to touch the last note and snatch a breath immediately. Another small problem that the composer often sets the singer is to give him a short verbal phrase, with plenty of time to take a breath before it, followed immediately by a long phrase with no rest in front of it. The obvious solution is to take a full breath before the short phrase so that only a very short time is needed between the two phrases to refill the lungs. Want of attention to such details causes just that very slight displacement of accent which is sufficient to make any singing rhythmically ineffective.

A song which is uncomfortably phrased for the singer is by no means necessarily a bad one. No one need condemn Schumann's 'Die Rose, die Lilie . . .' merely because a full-stop is crowded in between two consecutive semiquavers, and because there is one rest, of a semiquaver only, throughout the whole song. Nor need one refuse to sing 'Slumber, beloved,' from Bach's 'Christmas Oratorio' because there are twenty-eight bars without a rest. The general conception of a song is of more importance

\* I think it is better to sing the words as Shakespeare wrote them and sing through the rest rather than follow the many editions which write 'To her eyes doth love repair.'

† No indication can be given of the exact duration of the anticipation indicated by the small notes.

\* Mr. Ernest Newman has brought out this point very clearly in his comparison of the song-writing of Brahms and Wolf.

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than the details of its phrasing. A skilful singer can make a success of a song which is well conceived but badly phrased by the composer; but he cannot succeed with one where these merits and faults are interchanged.

It is best for the singer to deal with all these difficulties in practice by learning the music and the words separately. It has already been suggested that the melody of a new song—or of an old one for that matter—should be learnt as a vocal exercise by using the voice as a musical instrument. The words should also be studied carefully, and read aloud till they are known by heart and can be made to sound intelligible and interesting without the aid of the music. If the singer cannot make a success of these feats when tried separately, he is not within measurable distance of making their combination interesting to other people, however much he may enjoy the attempt himself. When these two sides of the art are well mastered separately, the difficulty of their blending, which is really the essence of the art of singing, seems to be overcome without any special conscious effort—except that which is the natural outcome of an imperfect technique, for one cannot arrange with the composer to have one's favourite note and favourite vowel sound coinciding at the climax of each *crescendo*.

The realisation that there are certain parts of the music which must not be interfered with leads to that unconscious anticipation which prevents one from taking a breath just at the moment when it is necessary to begin a phrase. On the other hand, a careful attention to the intelligent and unaffected presentation of the words brings about the realisation that vocal music is subtly different from instrumental music, and almost always requires a more flexible interpretation. As we have seen before, in passages where the syllables of commonly occurring words are written to be sung to notes of which the duration is nominally equal, the music must not insist on being taken too literally, for indeed the amount that it has to give way is usually so small as to be imperceptible by anything except some mechanical recording apparatus.

The question will certainly be asked here, How is it possible, or why should we trouble, to make differences in duration which are not directly recognised as such? The answer is that these minute differences are not made on the one hand or recognised on the other by thinking about differences of duration, but by thinking of the sound of familiar words.\* In the visual world one has no difficulty in distinguishing immediately between two friends whose faces are somewhat similar, but one would be very hard put to it to say by how

much the face of one was broader than that of the other, or which had the longer nose.

The mention of an independent method of measuring the exact equality of time-intervals brings us back once again to the question of rhythm and regularity. The business of the musician is not to play metronomically in time, but to play in a way that is satisfactory to the listener's expectation of regularity. This, so far as the beats of a bar are concerned, is not satisfied by exact mechanical equality unless the beats are all of exactly the same loudness. We are once again confronted with the interesting paradox that it is not possible for anyone to appear to play in time without actually playing out of time. A series of exactly equidistant beats can only be divided into groups (and equal grouping is the essence of rhythm) for the ear\* by making certain beats louder than others. This of course is the conventional accent on the first beat of the bar. As soon as this is done, however, the duration between the beats no longer sounds equal. Experiment shows that an accented beat tends to make the duration of the preceding measure appear shorter and that of the following one longer. Musicians and singers with any skill had discovered this fact long before it was confirmed by experimental psychology, and had learned to delay accented beats sufficiently for them to fit in correctly with their own and their hearers' desire for that particular kind of aesthetic satisfaction. There is no doubt that the ear is sensitive to extremely minute variations of such 'suspenses,' and, although they are not interpreted directly as differences in time-duration, their artistic effect in the aggregate is enormous.

We need not, however, have recourse to the apparatus of the psychological laboratory in order to clear up certain difficulties with regard to time and rhythm, for the muscular sense gives us an independent method of judging equality of time-intervals. Some people who are poor musicians (as the term is usually understood) are good dancers, and the criticisms of such people about the performance of dance music are as valuable as those of the more musical. Dancing and music (or some kind of ear-stimulation) have always been very closely connected. The physiological and psychological facts connected with this do not matter for the moment, since there is a very simple practical reason for it.† If a number of people are required to execute movements in time with one another, it is easier to conduct them by sound than by sight, for the sight method as a rule would necessitate their facing all in the same direction.

A waltzer is not upset by dotted crotchets, although his feet are moving regularly in time,

\* For the eye it is done by bar-lines.

† People who naturally remember things by ear (as opposed to the visual type) usually have strong muscular memories. The sensations of muscular tension in the organs of diction are for obvious reasons associated much more with sound than with sight in all normal people.

\* The mind in the poetic experience responds to subtler niceties than these, too slight indeed to be at any moment objects of distinct consciousness, yet become considerable in their aggregate influence.—Coleridge: "Biographia Literaria."

or nearly so. He does not expect the individual beats of the musical accompaniment to coincide with the beats of his feet, in fact he would probably find it dull if they did.\* But no one could dance at all comfortably if the bars of a waltz are not very nearly of equal length. The reason for the two-bar unit previously suggested as most suitable for the waltz will now be clear. If we are beating sets of three beats regularly with alternate feet, one bar will have two lefts with a right in between and the next will have two rights with a left in between. That is to say, there will be a group of six steps before the pattern of muscular sensations re-commences with the left foot on the strong musical beat of the bar. Thus in good waltz-playing there should every now and then be made clear a subtle distinction between the odd and even bars. Thus :



Waltzes played in such a way tend to go with a swing—which phrase is the colloquial way of expressing the satisfaction felt from the correlation of the muscular and musical sensations. When played with a steady equal accent on the first beat of every bar they tend to become jerky and monotonous to dance to, although certain eminently satisfactory musical effects can be obtained from the shorter rhythmical unit.

It is characteristic of the world of art that small physical differences such as those that we have been discussing are often responsible for very large psychological effects. If we tried to express the time differences between good and bad rhythm in seconds it would come to a very small fraction indeed, whereas the difference in the pleasure given by the two kinds of playing is recognised without the slightest difficulty. There is a simple enough explanation of this discrepancy between the apparent size of the cause (measured in one way) and that of the effect (measured in another), the gist of which may be understood by considering whether the throwing of a stone will cause an avalanche. It can easily be seen that this will happen only when several other 'causes' are ready to operate.

The inability to grasp these facts is responsible for the invention of that convenient genie,

'Personality,' which the pseudo-philosopher produces from his brass bottle as an independent cause to explain anything which puzzles him.

#### ELGAR'S 'FALSTAFF' RECONSIDERED

BY PERCY A. SCHOLES

In the June issue of the *Musical Times*, 'H. G.' raises a most interesting and important question—nothing less than that of How to Listen to Programme Music.

Elgar's 'Falstaff' is the occasion of the discussion. I had in a certain book described that great work as 'so far as public appreciation goes a comparative failure,' and given as the reason that 'the events and passions represented succeed one another so rapidly that even the most conscientious listener, with his eye on the programme book which details the happenings, must inevitably lose his way and find himself struggling to read into some passage a thought or emotion that belongs to a previous or subsequent moment.'

To this 'H. G.' (I think, on the whole, wisely) replies, 'Drop the programme book and listen in a more general way.' He says that he and his friends never really enjoyed or understood this work until they started taking the composition 'merely as a splendid piece of music, with the fat knight at the back of their mind.'

He adds a generalisation : 'A point-to-point setting doesn't always call for a point-to-point hearing,' and then, returning to the particular work in question, adds, "'Falstaff'" is gorgeous in sum because of its extraordinary wealth of detail. Our concern is with the sum.' (There is a lot to discuss in that last suggestion, but I shall have to neglect it in the present article. For the moment I will only say that I do not quite know how one can take in a time-art 'in the sum.)\*

I have just said that I think 'H. G.' advises wisely when he tells us to drop the programme book. When 'Falstaff' comes round, the 'Prom.' programme always gives us quite a solid article of a thousand words, with the 'order of going in' very carefully laid down; I have, however, never heard of any 'Prom.' listener who found the thousandth word and the final note coincide, unless he had intelligently discovered that (say) the words 'solo bassoon gives out coarsely his lying theme' had come before his eye at the point where Falstaff's snoring is heard from the double-bassoons and tuba, and effected a hasty adjustment—and unless he had been clever enough to act with similar presence of mind many times during the performance.

So I think 'H. G.' advises rightly when he tells us to turn our backs for once on our admired Rosa Newmarch and to let our minds stroll about London and the Gloucester orchards

\* Mr. Plunket Greene in his writings about rhythm has brought out very clearly the fascination of this form of hide and seek.

• Where is the difficulty? Although music is a time-art, it is made of details that can easily be separated. Wherever there are separable details, there must also be a sum.—H. G.

unaccompanied and without ever quite knowing in which street or orchard they are.

But that is not to say that the work is any the less 'a comparative failure,' for in following 'H. G.'s' advice we are surely but 'making the best of a bad job.' The composer never *meant us to listen* in that general way. There may, as 'H. G.' says, be works point-to-point-composed, but not intended to be point-to-point-heard, but can this be one of them? The generalisation may apply to certain compositions where the 'points' are few, consisting of the representation of broad incidents or emotions, such as cannot have hampered their composer in the normal musical development of his themes, but can it apply to a composition like this, where the composer has had every phrase and almost every note of his music imposed on him by the attempt to follow out a series of a hundred happenings? Can it be that *any* composer would submit to such close literary and pictorial control with the intention that his listeners should know nothing about it—or knowing, should deliberately attempt to avoid the application of their knowledge?

Now the programme notes of Mrs. Newmarch and others are not entirely of their own devising. They have authority—the best authority, that of the *Musical Times*. Indeed, they have the authority of the composer, for it was he who, in the issue of September, 1913, supplied the splendid nine-column description which was intended to prepare listeners for the work's first performance at the Leeds Festival in the following month.

In that description the score, though continuous, is considered under four 'divisions.' Division 1 opens with a theme in which we see Sir John 'in a green old age, mellow, frank, gay, easy, corpulent, loose, unprincipled, and luxurious,' and another of which we are told 'the gargantuan, wide-compassed *fortissimo* first given to the strings in three octaves exhibits his boastfulness and colossal mendacity.' There is a theme in which the Prince is suggested in his most courtly and genial mood. Of the passage in which these themes first occur it is said, 'As the scene is mainly a conversation, the music consists of a presentation and variation of these themes, ending with an impetuous rush of Example 1—the persuasive Falstaff has triumphed, the dominating Sir John is in the ascendant.'

(*Now why does the composer give us these details if he wishes us to ignore them?*)

In Division 2 'we are in Eastcheap and plunge into a quicker *tempo* commencing with a theme made up of short, brisk phrases.' The passage was 'suggested by the following paragraph' (in Dowden's Shakespeare):

'From the coldness, the caution, the convention of his father's Court, Prince Henry escapes to the teeming vitality of the London

streets and the tavern where Falstaff is monarch. There, among ostlers and carriers, and drawers, and merchants, and pilgrims, and loud robustious women, he at least has freedom and frolic.'

Then we are told that 'the musical illustration of the Tavern would not be complete without the Hostess and Doll Tearsheet, if not the "dozen or fourteen honest gentlewomen," so a suggestion [given in music type] of the theme associated with this most virtuous company flits across the fabric to find its full expression later.'

And thus the description of Division 2 goes on, with slices of musical quotations interlarded, which are definitely attached by the composer to 'the short struggle for a twice-stolen booty,' the 'discomfiture of the thieves' ('quavers hurried and scrambling'), the arrival of the thieves at the 'Boar's Head,' 'the knight again attempting speech,' Falstaff's sleep, and so forth.

(*Now would any composer tell us all this, wishing us to forget it?*)

Division 3 gives us themes of Falstaff's awakening, 'a dozen captains . . . knocking at the tavern and asking for Sir John Falstaff,' the march of the soldiers, Falstaff's joking in the face of danger, the march and the 'rest in Shallow's orchard,' some 'sadly-merry pipe and tabor music,' Pistol's announcement of the accession of Henry V., Falstaff's 'glorying in the news,' and so forth.

(*Now can we suppose that Elgar was deliberately wasting valuable 'Musical Times' space, and that all this is useless to the listener?*)

Division 4 gives the King passing on his way to Westminster Abbey, with 'his approach suggested by a strenuous version of Ex. 2, recalling the merry times at Gadshill, the orchestration now heavier and the import serious.' The climax comes with Ex. 5, fully harmonized and extended when the King appears, 'Glittering in golden coat . . . and gorgeous as the sun at midsummer.' Then, with a rush of quavers, the Falstaff theme (Ex. 1) is given *fortissimo*, and the King halts. A brief parley ensues, but Falstaff is inexorably swept aside by the King's brazen motto, and the last pitiful attempt at cajolery is rudely blasted by the furious fanfare (Ex. 16):

"How ill white hairs become a fool and jester—

I banish thee on pain of death."

Immediately the royal march is resumed, and dies away; the King has looked on his ancient friend for the last time.'

So the music and its description go on—'the broken man,' 'the death scene,' the 'cry of sack and of women,' a 'terrible nightmare version of the women's theme,' the fading of intelligence and the 'nerveless final struggles and collapse'—'the brass holds *pianissimo* a full chord of C major and Falstaff is dead.'

*Would Elgar tell us all this if he thought the knowledge of it would merely embarrass us?*

If Elgar had wished to provide 'merely a splendid piece of music, with the fat knight at the back of his mind,' he could assuredly have done so. Evidently that was not his intention. I do not want to be dogmatic, but it seems to me that Falstaff is the musical equivalent of a magnificent but much too rapid cinematograph film.

I stick to my view that 'Falstaff' is 'so far as public appreciation goes a comparative failure,' and that the composer and not the public is to blame for this. The next time I hear the work I shall try to do so with the relative blankness of mind that seems to come so easily to 'H. G.' and his friends, and if I find I then get as much pleasure as I always do out of either of Elgar's Symphonies (for *that* is the point) I will say so. For the moment (though I am quite aware I am opening up a big question and possibly, in a lesser measure, condemning certain other works, notably some by Strauss) I stand to my guns. But I would like to know the opinions of a good many other people. I would like to have a 'consensus of opinion' for or against 'P. A. S.' as compared with 'H. G.' I am not wrong, surely, in saying that the big public has never taken to 'Falstaff'; but how has that work impressed the general body of musicians?

On one matter I surely cannot be wrong—'Falstaff' is the most detailed 'programme' work ever composed. We have here the programme principle carried out in the most thorough way that anyone (short of the negligible authors of 'Battles of Prague' and the like) has ever dared to attempt. Indeed it is impossible to imagine that any composer can ever go a single step beyond it.

Having completed my article and discussed 'H. G.'s' views and my own, it occurred to me to turn to my file and see what some of our colleagues say about 'Falstaff.'

Eric Blom, in 'Stepchildren of Music':

'But if it be a question of popularity, the virtues of his symphonic poem are precisely its most serious defects. It is like a vast canvas, tremendously effective when seen at a distance, but at the same time so full of interesting detail that we are continually tempted to approach so closely as to be no longer able to take in the general impression. We are then torn between the choice of following the work with the aid of a score in order to savour the whole of its masterly craftsmanship, and of enjoying the greater aesthetic satisfaction of penetrating into the manner in which the character of the pot-bellied knight is visualised. "Falstaff," unfortunately, seems doomed to unpopularity simply because it cannot be absorbed by any hearer at one performance, and because only a minority of music lovers will take the

trouble of studying the work at the pianoforte or in the armchair, and of thus preparing themselves for a hearing by impressing the thematic material on their memory.'

A. J. Sheldon in the *Birmingham Post*, November 28, 1927:

'Towards an understanding of this portrait study in music the miniature full score on which the ordinary concert-goer must needs rely is not nearly so helpful as it might be. For though the plan of the work bears some relation to symphonic form the music is far from explained through its form. It is programmatic and allusive; we need a key to its programme and its allusions. Happily, though the miniature score does little towards informing us what was in the composer's mind when writing the music, Sir Edward himself, in an article appearing in the *Musical Times* of September, 1913, provided all the assistance a listener need desire. . . . The publishers would do well to arrange for its incorporation in future editions of the score.'

Ernest Newman in the *Sunday Times*, September, 1921:

'There is only one way to the full appreciation of it—to know it so well that every bar of it calls up the vision of the actor and the scene of the moment. In no other work of his does Elgar's imagination move with such rapidity. With an accompanying stage action the neatness with which every orchestral point is scored would be apparent at once. In the symphonic poem our audiences are used to a slower unfolding of just a single picture or two. The most crowded of the familiar canvases is "Till Eulenspiegel"; but even the changefulness of that is slow-footed in comparison with the mercurial nimbleness of "Falstaff."

My conclusion, after this consultation with my brethren, is, I feel, a commonsense one: The man who has the time and energy should give the work a Newmanian study, with both the score and Elgar's *Musical Times* article before him and a wet towel round his head. The man who can't do this had better follow 'H. G.'s' advice and let all that wonderful wealth of literary and pictorial detail go hang. But I still feel with regret that a work that calls for either of these extreme treatments is doomed, despite all its beauties and its amazing felicities of characterisation, to remain for ever "so far as public appreciation goes a comparative failure." Sir Edward has heaped the camel of public comprehension to the last straw and broken the poor beast's back.'

Some frank things were said about Chaliapin's Mephisto. The great man has now added to them. In the *Sunday Dispatch* of July 21 he said 'I am convinced that all the Mephistos before mine were rotten, and that mine is the same, the only difference being that maybe my predecessors were blinded by public enthusiasm and applause, whereas I am not.'

## Ad Libitum

BY 'FESTE'

### OPS. OR TITLES?

Some time ago (I forget where and when) I suggested that the time was coming when we should see the need for a Society for the Protection of Music.\* Some recent developments show the necessity to be even more urgent than I had thought. For example, here is Mr. Sokoloff, the American conductor, with his 'dramatised symphonies.' His particular way of maltreating music is to add a 'choreographic interpretation.' He took his first step on the downward path last season, and has been allowed to go even farther this year. In April he 'interpreted' Strauss's 'Herod's Life' by the aid of a *corps de ballet*, and I gather from an American paper that he has a whole string of orchestral masterpieces marked down for similar treatment.

Such tinkering with great music is based on the two-fold fallacy that all the world and his wife must be brought to appreciate the classics, and that the process is helped by tacking on programmes, ballets, and other superficial attractions. But what ground have we for claiming that Everyman must be made an enthusiast for fine music any more than for fine literature or any other form of art? The fact of our finding it necessary to gild the musical pill with 'choreographic interpretations' and other lures, proves that we are trying to force it on to people who don't want it. Indeed, that the best music is a pill to such folk is sufficient evidence as to their unfitness for it. Why then should masterpieces have their bloom rubbed off by being dramatised or be-programmed or otherwise ill-used in order to enlist a few unwilling recruits? We don't try to popularise great literature or pictorial art by cheapening it save in the only laudable way—in price.

Let us spread the appreciation of classical music among the crowd by all means; but we must not forget that there never was a time when concessions to the less affluent and less educated were so little needed as they are to-day. A generation ago music was expensive to buy and both difficult and costly to hear. To-day cheap editions abound for would-be performers, and those who wish to hear the finest of music at the hands of the world's finest performers can do so by a process as simple as turning on the water supply—and at about the same cost per annum. Formerly the trouble was to bring the crowd and the music together. We had all sorts of elaborate methods of leading the horse to the water, and enthusiastic musical missionaries went into raptures when the shy animal

pretended to drink. To-day, science brings the water to the horse for him to take or leave. If my neighbour switches on jazz and as resolutely switches off music, I may (and do) regret his choice, but I am not going to try to convert him by spinning pretty yarns and tacking them on to sonatas and symphonies. Still less (at my time of life) am I going to try to interpret them choreographically for his benefit. Musical propaganda, in fact, is in danger of going to undignified lengths. You may buy your convert at too big a price—not to yourself, but to the art.

I make no more than passing mention of the ballet—not because there is not much to be said, but because I doubt my ability to say it in language that will pass the editorial eye. I will therefore mildly refer to, and pooh-pooh, the fantastic idea that the posturings and contortions of an agile jackanapes can add to the significance of a piece of music. On the contrary, I assert, with steadily increasing mildness, that the ballet merely narrows down to one meaning (often a far-fetched one) a work that, left to itself, has almost as many meanings as it has listeners. It is a platitude, I know, but it needs to be insisted on to-day, that this variability enables music to leave every other art far behind. No chameleon ever changed its hues with the ease and frequency with which a piece of music changes its meaning. Even to the same player it may say something different on each day of the week, and in many instances—e.g., certain works of old composers where no pace is indicated—we may play it at all sorts of speeds with corresponding differences of signification. Then why rob music of this unique quality by tying it down to one interpretation? This is the main ground on which one may charge the ballet with being one of music's greatest enemies.

However, as I said above, I dare not trust myself to speak of the ballet. For the same reason I must pass by the cinema, with its musical hotch-potch made up of the *disjecta membra* of great musical works. A shade better is the restaurant, which does at least give us the music whole, though usually transcribed, and always degraded by being performed to an audience so busy with the flesh that the spirit has no chance. A good deal worse are the fox-trot compilers, despoiling the classics with their grimy paws.

Such crimes are to be expected from people who simply have no conception of the meaning and function of art. But what are we to say when music is wounded, or at least threatened, in the house of its friends? Is the expression too strong for the proposal of Mr. Compton Mackenzie (backed up all too readably by Mr. Percy Scholes in the current number of

\* It is likely that in Germany such protection will be undertaken by the State, for the Prussian Academy of Arts and Sciences is collecting evidence in support of a law for the safeguarding of musical classics.

the *Gramophone*) that the classics should be popularised by being given fancy labels? Let it be granted that opus numbers make little appeal to the imagination (I say 'little' rather than 'no,' because some opus numbers do in fact make a considerable appeal. Personally, I always get an extra pinch of pleasure out of Schumann's 'Papillons' by remembering that it was his Opus 1; and I am sure that players of the first three Pianoforte Sonatas of Beethoven might find profitable reflection in the fact of their being marked 'Opus 2'). Mr. Scholes says:

'This cold, statistical treatment is all that composers give to many of their loveliest creations. They deliberately suppress the individuality of their compositions. Look at the official opus numbers of Chopin, running to 73; of Mendelsohn, running to 121; of Schumann, running to 148; of Schubert, to 173; of Beethoven, to 256; of Johann Strauss, the elder, to 477.'

First, how is the individuality of a composition affected by its being numbered? On Mr. Scholes's own showing, the great majority of the finest things in music have numbers, but not names. Yet the 'cold statistical treatment' has not prevented them from winning a place in the heart of generations of musicians. On the other hand, the pieces of bad music that have achieved lasting popularity by means of a fancy title are comparatively few. Mr. Scholes goes on to say:

'Of course, musical compositions in addition to their numbers are often also described by their key, but that doesn't help. To the public it is merely something additional to try to remember—another bugbear. What a folly for a musical parent to dub his offspring, "Opus 51, No. 3, in B flat major," and then to think the man in the street will dote on it and write to the B.B.C. to ask for it again.'

But the man in the street usually has his *Radio Times* at hand, and in any case the work is described by the announcer before being played. Is the man in the street so lazy, or such a fool, that he cannot write down a key or a number as easily as a fancy title? I, for one, am getting very tired of the man in the street to whom arts and artists are supposed to salaam so abjectly. If his High Mightiness doesn't think good music is worth a little trouble, let him go without it. Hear Mr. Scholes again:

'A few professional musicians may talk opus numbers, but the general public never will.'

Only 'a few'? More, surely. A host of musicians, professional and amateur, can identify a great many works by their opus numbers. Then why be so solicitous for the general public? I repeat that a member of the herd who doesn't

care enough for music to master a few technical terms and opus numbers should be left in his sloth and ignorance.

So far from objecting to opus numbers, I regret that the early composers didn't use them. There are many instrumental works by Bach and Handel, for example, that have to be nick-named (not in place of opus numbers, but because no opus numbers were used). So we have organists, for example, obliged to speak of the 'Great' G minor in order to distinguish it from numerous other preludes and fugues by Bach in the same key.

But let me end by pointing out a practical obstacle to the Compton Mackenzie-Percy Scholes scheme. In the paragraph quoted above, Mr. Scholes gives a few opus number totals. If you tot them up you will see they run to well over a thousand—1,248 to be exact. Add the works of composers not mentioned by Mr. Scholes and we shall have a total of some hundreds of thousands of pieces waiting labels. Let the labelling committee get to work forthwith; I wish them joy in their task. One advantage of numbers is that the supply can never run short. But titles! . . . Stephen Heller, you will recollect, compiled a set for Mendelsohn's 'Songs Without Words' (hardly any of which titles are now used, by the way, though Stephen was a fit and proper person to do the job). If he were alive to-day he would probably tell us that the labelling of even this little set of pieces was a stiff task. 'All went well,' he would say, 'for the first dozen or so, and there was no difficulty with such pieces as the "Bee's Wedding"—except that it might just as well be called "Spinning Song" (in fact, I even forgot which title I used), but long before the end was reached I wished I had never started on the job. I see now that it was both unnecessary and presumptuous.'

Finally (really so this time), don't the labelling enthusiasts see that the attaching of titles to pieces of abstract music at once limits the appeal of the music in the way I have tried to show above? Mr. Compton Mackenzie made much of the fact that such titles as the 'Archduke,' the 'Rasoumovsky,' and the 'Waldstein' are accepted by musicians. True; they are accepted readily because they have reference to the *origin* of the pieces. They are not only convenient; they are also of historic interest. They suggest no programme or interpretation, and so they leave the music free. Some unwarranted, but generally accepted, titles do, I admit, hint at a programme—e.g., the 'Pathétique' and the 'Appassionata'—but they are exceptions, and they are tolerated because the consensus of musical opinion has decided that they fit. On the other hand, the great C major Sonata has been called the

'Aurora,' but practically all musicians prefer the much more prosaic but interesting and informative title the 'Waldstein.'

On practical no less than artistic grounds, then, the opus number wins the day; but the mere fact of these labelling suggestions having been made and sponsored by a leading amateur musician and a prominent critic shows that music is in constant danger of being saddled with unauthorised and narrowing titles and programmes.

Even Mr. W. W. Cobbett's 'Encyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music' contains a short article which gave me a shock, coming, as it did, from one whom I had always regarded as a champion of abstract music. The article is entitled 'Choreography—Its Alliance with Chamber Music.' Mr. Cobbett begins by saying that he had always fought an instinctive feeling that in all music, even in the most serious, there was a suggestion of bodily movement, of miming and the dance. He says that he was jealous of the intrusion of any conception of music other than the spiritual, but in the end he gave way, and is now convinced that music and the dance are indivisible. He proceeds to illustrate it by an account of a visit paid to him at his house by Ruth St. Denis, the famous dancer, who, after listening to Mr. Cobbett's quartet party, said, 'This splendid music surely lends itself to illustration by dancing and miming; it is "asking" for it.' Miss St. Denis was as bad as her word, for she had the carpet up forthwith and improvised a scene which I'm sorry to hear gives Mr. Cobbett 'much reminiscent joy.' Asking for the Andante from Dvorák's 'Nigger' Quartet, she tacked on and illustrated, ballet-wise, the following story:

'A geisha who had lost her lover visits the shrine erected over his burial place, and honours his memory in the only way she knows—by dancing before it; first of all with quiet dignity, and then, as the excitement of the music grows in intensity, with frenzied animation. During the final melodramatic bars she falls to the ground unconscious.'

(Think of the simple pathos of this movement, and ask yourself where the bereaved and distraught geisha comes in.)

Mr. Cobbett says that this little melodrama was illustrated in a manner so arresting that the quartet-players had difficulty in keeping their eyes from wandering in the direction of the dancer—which I can readily believe. That is the completest condemnation of such an interpretation. When I hear the Andante of the 'Nigger' Quartet played I want nothing to distract my mind from the music. Mr. Cobbett then leads on to an article from Mr. Leigh Henry, who begins by saying:

'To suggest union between dancing and chamber music is almost offensive to some.

This is largely the result of stiff 19th-century convention, by which the intimate significance of chamber music has been forgotten.'

But what matters to us is not the 'original significance of chamber music,' but the importance of hearing the masterpieces in that form free from extra-musical associations and distractions. Happily, the account Mr. Leigh Henry gives of experiments with which he has been associated suggests that the amount of success attained is so modest that chamber music is safe yet awhile. But I repeat that Mr. Cobbett gave me a shock. What music is safe from the despoiling hand of the 'interpreter' after this? Clearly the time is ripe for a Crusade on Behalf of Music—just plain MUSIC with no nonsense about it.

We must start that Society!

#### PUBLIC SCHOOL MUSIC: A PRACTICAL VISIONARY

By A. E. F. DICKINSON

The value of trained musical experience as a vital factor in the building up of human character is now generally established in educational circles, if we except those strongholds of conservative opinion which are still to be found in some corner of every public school, ancient or modern. It is less commonly understood how much music owes its honoured position in the educational world to the pioneer work of a few individuals at the turn of the century, as well as to the sound expansion of that work in the last twenty years by men more fortunate, perhaps, but none the less solely responsible.

The recent death of the Rev. A. H. Peppin, musical director at Mill Hill, Clifton, and Rugby, may serve as a reminder of the historical situation. Peppin was by no means the first man in his position to win a general respect for music in the school in which he was working. One of Thring's earliest ventures at Uppingham was the engagement of a music-master, and the entry into a public school of Herr David (so aptly named for the discomfiture of Philistines!) soon proved, once and for all, that music was a more than engaging school activity, capable in a unique way of developing the best qualities in those who had previously thought of it as an effeminate or abnormal pursuit. Although, however, David's all-conquering genius set a magnificent example to other schools and other musical directors, much remained to be done, and Peppin, appointed to Clifton in 1896, initiated certain vital schemes which every energetic and enlightened director now pursues as a matter of course, and formulated many other practical aims on such a sound basis, and with such far-reaching results, as to deserve some kind of record. He has written clearly and attractively on his general aims and methods, musical and educational, in his book

'Public Schools and their Music,' but a summarised account of his work may here be attempted.

In the first place, at a time when 'the music master' usually confined his activities to teaching a few boys the pianoforte and training the choir and orchestra (if any), Peppin joined forces with David in determining to bring the whole school into regular and vital contact with music. Always a practical visionary, he saw that stirring musical experience was within the reach of all, given suitable material and also (a significant educational point which David seems to have overlooked) a certain amount of systematic training in the assimilation of it; and he believed that this progress towards musical 'revelation' would, if properly conducted, awaken the imagination, invigorate the mind, and train the attention of all concerned. Having secured, then, the official approval of a concert by a professional orchestra, 'classical' but carefully varied in content, he gave four lectures on the music to be played, in which he endeavoured to prove, by apt comment and thorough illustration, that a hearty familiarity with the principal themes, and a plain understanding of their general development, so immensely added to the enjoyment of music as to place it in a new category of interest, for the musically untrained as well as for the more professional listener. The reception of the concert immediately justified the attempt. It 'stirred up' those who had never heard the like before; but for those in whom the lectures had already awakened a keen sense of anticipation, the thrill of full orchestral performance proved in many cases the beginning of a life-enjoyment of music. The scheme became an annual affair, and nowadays it is as widely practised in schools as it was experimental in 1901.

Then, Peppin became aware of much unfulfilled talent, latent in the numerous learners of instruments, and possibly in those who were not learning at all. He therefore instituted, first at Clifton and subsequently at Rugby, inter-house instrumental competitions, whose appeal to corporate work encouraged the diffident performer, stimulated the musically lazy, interested the 'non-musicians,' and, above all, induced many noble attempts at chamber music, and even house orchestras. The musical value of such competitions consists, in the end, in their capacity to raise the standard of individual performance, and in this connection the instrumental basis, under expert supervision of some kind, must be emphasised. An ensemble of necessarily untrained voices, such as school singing competitions produce, can never approach in real achievement a good string quartet movement, with all its hardly won individual accomplishment and as hardly won unanimity of performance.

The inducements to increased musical effort, which these competitions and the regular work

of the school orchestra provided, were thus only inducements—the efficient, not the formal, cause. The only true basis of sound artistic endeavour was a high, and not too stationary, ideal of performance in the mind of all concerned, master or boy. And Peppin's systematic efforts to impress such a standard upon *every* learner deserve particular stress because there used commonly to be, and still partly survives, an idea that in a school it is hopeless to expect any musical standard from the untalented performer, unable to give more than an hour or two a week to his musical work. Peppin was one of the first directors to prove, by his personal supervision and careful organization, the entire falsity of such an attitude. Under him, the obligation to master a piece before it was 'left' was put before every boy who learnt music, and he himself kept a record of all pieces so mastered or abandoned; he also issued a comprehensive list of carefully graded pieces, which showed each boy the standard of the pieces he was learning and encouraged him to prove worthy of a higher-grade piece. Finally, Peppin's own pupils received an unusually sound and careful training. As against the view, already partly indicated, that there is no time at school for a thorough technical grounding, he maintained with almost unfailing success that the general foundations of tone-production were not difficult to lay down, and that in any case without tone-control nearly all real interpretation was impossible. He also developed sight-reading with remarkable effectiveness, by systematic attention.

Systematic attention, indeed, was the keynote of Peppin's work. Had it sprung from a love of system for system's sake it would neither have been attractive to those for whose immediate benefit it was exercised, nor remained an inspiration for his professional successors. But Peppin's unceasing efforts for public school music radiated from a reverent sympathy for the rising generation, which Youth greeted with willing and often affectionate co-operation and Experience will remember with a rare respect.

#### THE NEW MASTERSINGERS: A HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE

There is no doubt that they are a remarkable family.

We met for the first time by the old stone bridge that spans the Irt just below Wastwater. Scarcely had the formalities of introductions been concluded before I was plied with all sorts of questions.

'The key of C major is perfectly red, like a bus or a pillar-box, isn't it?' said the Mater.

'Well, perhaps so,' I answered, hedging. 'But don't you think it has also got something of grey in it, like granite, or, more nearly, like wonderful Norman columns, because of all its strength and immovability?'

Jean and Lorn, aged fourteen and ten respectively, were inclined to concede me my colour scheme, which restored my confidence somewhat.

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workable stone water. been parts of a bus 'But grey-ful and spec-colour hat.

Matters then went further.

'Which is the most sentimental key?' I asked. There was a complete silence and some hard thinking.

'A flat?'.

'What do you think, Lorn?'.

Lorn replied that he agreed with me! This called forth loud protests from Mater and Jean. The former voted for D flat major for some reason which I cannot remember now; the latter for G major. So we were at variance again.

'Well, the mountains? What key do they suggest?' And we looked for help from Great Gable and the Screes and thought of Scafell round the corner.

'All keys,' replied Mater. 'E major near the water; something of E minor; there's also a D sharp somewhere—I think the key must be G sharp minor—and A minor at the top of them.'

On the truth of the last remark we all seemed agreed for once. I thought of Grieg and Norway, and was myself reassured in the general belief that A minor was not so very far out. The presence of the three 'white' notes in this triad carried my mind back to our conclusions on the C majorish quality of the Norman columns. It seemed right (to me) that the A minorish granite in its natural state should have been fashioned into the relative major at the hands of the masons of long ago.

Then Jean remarked that F sharp minor was the green of the sea, a statement we could not refute. I ventured on E flat major as perhaps the best key for noble human utterances. On this, however, there was again some difference of opinion, despite the examples I quoted from Beethoven, Wagner, and Strauss.

After a couple of miles' walk, mainly spent in arriving at inconclusions of this kind, we reached our small hotel at Nether Wasdale, to find Pater waiting for our return.

At the end of the evening meal, by way of Grace the family quartet suddenly and without warning broke into a five-fold—or it may have been a seven-fold—Amen, composed by Mater in the appropriate mountain-top key of A minor. I had already guessed, by the way, that the entire family must have possessed absolute pitch.

Lorn took the top part, Jean the alto, Mater (like Rosalind counterfeiting to be a man) became a counter-tenor for the occasion, whilst Pater took the bass line. The effect of it all was delightful and the pitch perfect.

The best criticism came from an old lady staying in the hotel, who, in response to an apology for the 'noise' created, said that 'it sounded like a cathedral!'

Naturally, imaginations were stirred by these events. So after dinner, and at the conclusion of a desperate card-game, 'chicken-food,' we fell to inventing some new 'Amens.'

These we called 'Modes,' and they all had to go to the word 'Amen' for the simple reason that (unlike the Mastersingers of old) skill in the art of making impromptu poetry was not a marked feature of our party.

[I suppose we felt 'modal' because there had been some talk on Dr. Herbert Thompson's informative and delightfully written book 'Wagner and Wagenseil.']}

The first 'Amen' composed was promptly labelled 'After a Feast of Good Things,' being also called the 'Wasdale' or 'Festal' Mode:

Ex. 1. A - men, A - men.

It was rehearsed silently during lunch the next day—the various parts having been written out on old envelopes and other scraps of paper.

Then it was performed as a Grace after meat. Lorn was again treble, Jean alto, and their mother took her usual counter-tenor part.

Having been responsible for the writing of this Mode, I was invited to join Pater on the bass line. I ventured a suggestion or two on matters of detail, making an especial point of asking Mater to double Jean on the major third of the Tierce at the end, so that she (Mater), plus the two grown-up males, should not swamp Lorn and Jean on their low-pitched notes. This almost led to a quarrel, for my unfortunate suggestion provoked Jean to something like this:

'No, no, Mater; it's my Tierce, you know it is! Besides, it's not proper part-writing if you sing it as well. The root ought to be doubled.' [N.B.—It already was.]

So the Tierce had to remain in Jean's safe keeping, and then we launched the Mode.

We had felt the night before that such a Mode demanded a companion. So we also created the 'After a Frugal Meal' Mode. Here it is:

Ex. 2. A - men.

'My word,' said Lorn after we had sung it, 'it makes me feel jolly hungry.' He thereupon applied himself with zest to another helping of plum-tart. So we were compelled, in consequence of this flagrant disrespect to a Grace already sung, to go back at the very end of the meal to another performance of the Festal Mode proper. It was obvious at the time that the Frugal Mode would be sung very rarely!

The next day 'Modes' were very much in the air. They had become a pleasant plague.

In the afternoon we had gone, partly by road and partly by the 'toy' railway, to Eskdale, where we picnicked by the river. Over tea we invented still more Modes, or names for Modes, and sang one—the 'Babbling Brook' Mode. It was quite short, and went like this:

Ex. 3.

I put Jean, Lorn, and Aunt Peggy on the top line—firstly, so that the laughing-water effect should be sufficiently prominent, and secondly, because Lorn's small treble was not quite weighty enough for the quick-moving semiquavers.

Then somebody produced from I don't quite know where sufficient copies of Orlando Gibbons's eight-fold Amen in D (the one which I believe is sung at Westminster Abbey) to enable us to give a fairly good reading of its five-part polyphony.

Anyway, I swear the mountains nodded approval and the river sang more melodiously than ever, as if wishing to join in with an *obbligato* part.

Eventually we got back to Nether Wasdale to a sunset which applied itself to the landscape with colours of old gold, russet, and purple, as well as reddening the distant bracken to the fieriness of a poppy-field. But the mountain-tops were still pitched in the key of A minor, wreathed as they were in thin wisps of filmy cloud and giving a rare touch of completion to a scene of unforgettable loveliness.

Then we promised ourselves we would write a 'Russet Sunset' Mode, to be followed next day by the 'Mode of the Bunkered Tee-shot,' or (if wet) by that of the 'Chicken-food.' But we were so active enjoying ourselves in many other ways that I am afraid we seldom got further than the titles of most of the Modes.

One, however, is waiting to be written when justice can be done to it—the 'Mode of the Moonlighted Wastwater.' But we may have to wait a long time before it can be created in all its proper loveliness. The key of A minor is obviously too remote. Besides which, the children would argue very successfully that it was not usual to find mountain-tops at the water's edge.

This is the tale of how we came to play at being the New Mastersingers on four days of a brief holiday in Lakeland.

KOBOLD.

#### ON THE SIMPLICITY OF SINGING

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Many of us have observed that every expression of the face is reflected in the sound of the voice, that it is impossible to portray happiness with the one and, at the same time, sorrow with the other.

Considered from the face downwards, the component parts of the voice are :

1. The facial expression.
2. The tone spaces in the mouth and throat.
3. The vocal cords in the 'Adam's apple.'
4. The pressure of the breath.

By the elusive art of the singer these components act as one harmonious whole.

The face is free for the expression of our emotions, richness is added to the tone, unerring precision to the tune, while, on the basis of a controlled breath, the sounds of the voice are started, sustained, and intensified.

The art may also be said to consist of two branches—the management of the instrument itself, and that of the power by which it is set in action.

The violinist learns to tune with one hand and (possibly of greater importance) has to acquire the use of the bow with the other. The pianist studies the fingering of both hands, but solves

(only too slowly) the mysteries of touch—that sensitive expression in all that he fingers.

The vocal student encounters difficulties similar to those who study other instruments. He fails to start exactly on the pitch; a cramped state of the throat interferes with the tone and pronunciation; and the breath slips out in waste. He becomes confused by the problems of how to sing with freedom of throat, how to produce more voice, and yet retain mastery over the breath.

It has been found that on whispering some vowel—say 'Ah'—for a few seconds the throat feels much less cramped than during ordinary singing.

About the year 1880 a Prof. Donders, of Utrecht, Holland, noticed that the vowels, when quietly whispered, caused the air in the mouth and throat to resound at a different pitch.

We are indebted to Dr. William Aikin, of London, for having determined the exact pitch of every vowel, and for having arranged a sequence of the English vowels which, when correctly whispered, cause a musical scale to be distinctly heard.

It is certain that when a man sustains a whispered 'Ah,' and can tune this whisper to the note C (an octave above the third space, treble clef), he has found out the greatest resonance belonging to that vowel, and realises, moreover, a remarkable sense of open throat and a surprising freedom and unconsciousness of the tongue. Should the vowel tune down to B natural or B flat, or up to C sharp or D, his throat no longer feels as wide open, nor is his tongue so free and unconscious as when he tuned the whisper correctly.

The truth of this being indisputable, the following axioms seem to suggest themselves as worthy of careful consideration :

1. By correctly tuning a *whispered vowel* we realise the state of open throat and freedom of tongue which we seek to attain during singing.

2. The vocal cords being situated close to the base of the tongue, their natural action depends on the freedom of the tongue.

3. Freedom of throat and tongue sets up, in like freedom, the soft palate, the lips, face, and eyes.

4. Throaty, gloomy, nasal, or 'silly' tones are incompatible with that state of throat by which we can correctly tune the vowels. The following whispered scale should be assiduously practised, singly, in twos or threes, then up the entire scale. The associated words contain the vowel sounds. The actual vowel sounds are disclosed by omitting the consonants. On account of their smaller mouth cavities, the corresponding whispers of women are tuned a minor third higher than those of men. Thus :

A man whispering ' who ' should sound F, a woman A	2
" " ' would ' .. .. F $\sharp$ .. A $\sharp$	
" " ' know ' .. .. G .. B $\flat$	
" " ' aught ' .. .. A .. C	
" " ' of ' .. .. B .. D	
" " ' art ' .. .. C .. E $\flat$	
" " ' must ' .. .. D .. F	
" " ' learn ' .. .. E .. G	
" " ' and ' .. .. F .. A $\flat$	
" " ' then ' .. .. G .. B $\flat$	
" " ' take ' .. .. A .. C	
" " ' his ' .. .. B .. D	
" " ' ease ' .. .. C .. E $\flat$	

(The consonants not to be whispered.)

These whispered words form a sentence which may be memorised.

Another exercise may be whispered up and down in the same breath :  
Men whisper—



two or three times in the same breath.  
Women whisper—



two or three times in the same breath.

While practising the foregoing exercises it will be realised that a sense of 'open throat' is the same thing as that of 'freedom of the tongue.' It must not be expected, however, that we can all at once sing with the same ease that we *whisper*. The vocal cords have to be tuned and set in vibration. This is at first a disturbing factor, because it draws our attention from the breath control.

At the risk of vain repetition I now point out the following, the truth of which experience seems only to emphasise more and more :

1. Although we can tune the *whispered* scale by adjusting the resonance chambers, we cannot *tune* the *vocal scale* by anything we can *see* or *feel*, as we have no direct command over the vocal cords.

2. All we can do is to decide upon a note, and on singing this to observe how near is the result to the sound we intended.

3. Now *that* is the right mechanism which causes the sound to start in the very 'eye' of the note without our being conscious of having a throat. The correct action of the vocal cords is proved by the note starting exactly on the pitch we intended.

4. So, by *alertness in listening*, we gradually gain a *mental conception* of the mechanism which tunes the different notes with precision. (The influence on singing of languages which do not sustain the vowels is not considered here, for all singers must learn to sustain the vowels.)

Our first axiom may now read : By correctly tuning a whispered vowel we realise a state of *open throat* which we must now attain while SINGING.

Owing to the attachment of the vocal cords near the base of the tongue, the slightest rigidity of the latter during singing upsets the natural action of the vocal instrument.

On account of inexperience or awkwardness the rigid tongue can prevent accuracy of tune, purity of tone and pronunciation, natural facial expression, and a right control of the breath.

It is impossible to sing with a *rigid tongue* and at the same time with an *open throat*. One nullifies the other. Indeed, the art of singing lies in the avoidance of the one and the adoption of the other. A correct method of controlling the breath is the foundation of the entire edifice. On tuning a *whisper* we notice a sensation as of warming the breath. It must be the same during singing. Below the waist something seems *pressing out* the breath, while just above, and at the same time, it seems that something is *holding back* the

breath. This double action causes a sense of struggle ; the *hold back* must not let the *send out* gain the mastery or the result is waste, but should the *hold back* overcome the *send out* we should be said to be 'holding the breath.' With every note correctly emitted, the breath-feeling and the freedom of throat should be precisely the same as during whispering. A good note never requires a greater pressure than, with experience, we can regulate.

With every good note the sensation of breath control is 'as though coming towards one,' and with the least rigidity the breath is felt to be pressed outwards, and only half-controlled. A bad note, by the displacement of the instrument, demands a pressure, greater than we can balance, as if 'warming.'

A good note, having the open state of throat, demands a breath-control underneath, or, lacking this, perishes for want of such control.

The sensation of the open throat is that of 'yawning,' while that of the breath is like 'warming.'

The usual procedure of practice in singing is to start single notes on 'Ah' or 'Lah,' then two notes or more, scales, intervals, arpeggios, change of vowel, *crescendo*, all the exercises which suggest themselves to every good teacher. The notes of the scales gradually join themselves 'like pearls on a string' (which is the breath). With further experience more tone and more character are acquired.

When practising, start *ah, ah, ah, ah* in the same breath. First take a *silent* breath, and plenty of it ; do not think of the note, but of *tuning* it. On failure to start the note exactly, try again a thousand times until you succeed, then prolong the sound. Do not think too much of the vowel, for as long as the tongue is free like yawning, the breath will adjust itself to the note, and the 'Ah' will sound as it did when tuning the whisper.

As the voice acquires greater power, remember that greater pressure is necessary, and greater skill is required for singing such loud notes without stiffening the throat. Practise long notes by swelling from *pp* to *ff* and back to *pp*, and let the motto be 'never louder than lovely.'

Oft-repeated singing of loud notes is most fatiguing to the body, although nothing should be felt at the throat. In order to acquire this breath-pressure, an excellent device is to devote a few minutes daily to practising while extended on the couch. The awkwardness of holding up the chest or raising the shoulders when breathing in is at once realised, as well as the obvious advantage of silently breathing with enormous expansion at the waist.

The tuned whispers should be practised and now made to last out ten or fifteen seconds.

In this way the art is acquired of drawing in silently and suddenly enormous breaths, and of slowly pressing out the same for long phrases. Finally, we shall be equipped with a balanced breath-length which will never fail us, even should we eventually have to sustain with emotion the highest and loudest effects in grand opera.

[Readers may like to know that a development of these views, with further illustrations, may be found in 'Plain Words on Singing,' by William Shakespeare (G. P. Putnam's Sons).—Editor.]

## STAGES IN THE HISTORY OF OPERA

I.—CLAUDIO MONTEVERDE

By J. A. WESTRUP

However the critical student may scoff at the historian's landmarks, protesting that a few outstanding trees are made to do duty for unbroken forest, it should be clear that to insist on the importance of individuals is not merely an arbitrary misinterpretation of the facts designed to make history easier to handle and remember. If anyone considers his own experience, he will readily recall that if he has ever been privileged to take part in any activity, however humble, which has rapidly developed into a continuous tradition, it was some unusually energetic or unusually gifted person who was mainly responsible for launching the movement. Not that launching a movement implies necessarily striking out into entirely new paths. Few are endowed with originality to the extent of being able to create something entirely new without any precedent whatever. Hence the plausibility of the widely-accepted theory that the great composer comes not at the beginning but at the end of an epoch, that he sums up all that has been said before, while providing a new starting-point for the numerous imitators who are bound to follow. Creative genius is nearly always dependent on what has gone before.

These few familiar generalisations may be helpful for a consideration of the importance of Monteverde, whose eccentricities have become better known to the average musician from the examples most frequently quoted than those more solid and enduring aspects of his genius which entitle him to the honoured place which he holds in the history of music. It is curious that until comparatively recent years he should have been celebrated mainly as the composer of 'Orfeo' and the one surviving fragment of 'Arianna,' so that his achievements in opera tended to obscure his work in other branches of composition. 'Orfeo' was regarded as the composer's most notable work, almost, in fact, as a unique example of his genius, and as one of the earliest examples of the practical use of orchestral effects. The discords and harmonic progressions were dug out of their context and exhibited to a bewildered public as evidence that Monteverde was really a very remarkable composer.

In all this there was a lack of a sense of proportion. Monteverde was already forty years old when 'Orfeo' was produced at Mantua in 1607, and had already published five books of madrigals. In writing 'Orfeo' he was striking out new paths only in so far as he himself was attempting a new form of composition, and doing it better than his predecessors. To understand this it is necessary to remember the foundations on which 'Orfeo' was built. The tendency of the Renaissance had been to emphasise the possibilities of secular as opposed to purely religious culture, and to draw inspiration from the art and literature of Greece, with which the Middle Ages had to a great extent lost touch. It was only natural that music and the drama should be affected by this change. At the same time it was impossible for it to escape entirely from the tradition of liturgical drama which was the undoubted forerunner of opera and oratorio. Into this outworn mould the Italians poured all that they considered most characteristic of the

spirit and culture of Greece. Mythology was ransacked for suitable subjects, and the sensual and luxurious tastes of the petty oligarchs of the end of the 15th century were well adapted for the appreciation of all that was most suggestive in this attractive paganism. The City of God or the Heavenly Jerusalem was forsaken for the delights of the newly-discovered Arcadia, the seductive company of nymphs and satyrs, and the joys of Bacchus.

The story of Orpheus was particularly suitable for representation. As Mr. Henderson remarks with almost lyrical fervour,\* 'he was the singer of the hymns that woke all Nature to life. For him the satyr capered and the coy nymph came bridling from her retreat, the woods became choral and the streams danced in the sunlight to the magic of his pipe.' Further, the story offers possibilities in the descent of Orpheus to Hades and his subsequent unsuccessful return, followed by his destruction at the hands of the Thracian Maenads. For these reasons the subject was not only adopted by the celebrated poet Poliziano (or Ambrogini, to give him his original name) in his 'Favola di Orfeo,' produced at the end of the 15th century, but also by the 17th-century opera composers, Peri, Caccini, Monteverde, and not a few of their successors.

The subject of Monteverde's 'Orfeo' is thus directly inherited from Greek mythology through the spectacular representations in the Courts of Italy in the 15th century. The only remarkable difference is that Orpheus is not torn to pieces by the devotees of Bacchus but translated to Heaven (wherever that may be in the scheme of things) by Apollo, in order to secure a happy ending. The foundations of the music are a little more complicated. The Florentine *dilettanti* who found in monody the solution of the problem of re-creating Greek drama and supplying an adequate musical setting to the written word would not have been able to discover what they wanted if there had not already been precedents for musical drama. It is impossible to know what was the nature of the music in Poliziano's 'Orfeo,' and it is quite likely that much of it was spoken, but it is probable that the songs were sung quite simply to a lute accompaniment. Much might have come from a natural development of this style, if the rise of the madrigal had not thrown the old secular monody into the shade and produced its own type of dramatic performance—the extraordinary and cumbrous madrigal-drama of which Vecchi's 'Amfiparnaso' is the best-known example. In this the words of the actors would be simultaneously sung by musicians behind the scenes with orchestral accompaniment, the upper voices generally singing the part of a female character and so on. But the madrigal having reached its height as a musical form underwent an inevitable disintegration, and rapidly became a solo with thorough-bass accompaniment. Many things had contributed to bring about this change, not least the popularity of transcriptions for solo voice and lute of compositions which had originally been written for several voices.

Italian musical art thus returned again to monody, which had not been lost—productions similar to Poliziano's were numerous in the 16th century—but rather swamped by the madrigal,

\* 'Some Forerunners of Italian Opera' (Murray, 1911), p. 64.

which substituted for simple solos all the polyphonic apparatus of the skilled musician, the technique of the mass and the motet applied to secular subjects. Now, the figured bass opened to composers opportunities for free and expressive declamation, which would hardly have existed if the madrigal had continued to hold sway. And once free and expressive declamation is possible, the words take on a new significance, and purely personal passion can be expressed with all the resources of melody and harmony. True, it was the fashion to set the text of a madrigal so that individual expressions were appropriately interpreted—often with some naïveté—in the music, and there was even an attempt at reproducing the atmosphere of a poem. But this was nothing to the new freedom which allowed emotion to be translated by the diverse inflexions of a solo voice and by the changing harmonies of an accompaniment.

The importance of Monteverde is that he realised the possibilities of the new style. For Peri and Caccini it had meant essentially that they would be able to set each syllable to a note of appropriate length, and that the effect of the whole would be similar to the Greek drama as originally performed in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. If they were prevented by instinctive musicianship from creating the dry and sterile productions which should have resulted from strict obedience to this theory, that was rather a matter of accident. They proclaimed the inanity of mere vocal ornamentation, but they were unable to avoid introducing much that must have been pleasing to the taste of the day. In their works we find not only restrained and not unexpressive examples of the new recitative, but also melodious passages in thirds of the kind which have tickled the Italian ear from quite early times. They were a characteristic of the popular *villancico*, and since opera owed not a little to early popular part-music, they naturally survived in the early experiments, and were employed with success by Monteverde, not only in 'Orfeo' but also in his madrigals and, more particularly, in his 'Scherzi musicali.'

This very brief sketch of the ancestry of Monteverde's 'Orfeo' should help to explain much that seems a little confusing when the work is heard for the first time. His recitative derives from the experiments of the Florentines, his choruses and concerted numbers develop out of the madrigal with *continuo* accompaniment, and he casts an eye also at the popular device of consecutive thirds. And behind these technical features is the whole history of the earlier musical drama, and behind that the great driving force of the Renaissance which made all these things possible. The diversity of style which appears in 'Orfeo' is more noticeable to-day than it would have been when it was first performed. The audience, an aristocratic and cultured audience, would have been familiar both with the madrigal style and the new recitative, and would have seen no incongruity in their association in a single work. With these tools ready to his hand and the skill to use them, Monteverde showed how far a composer of genius can transform dry theory into astounding practice and give new life to old tradition. That is, in short, why 'Orfeo' is a notable work. If we were merely anxious to celebrate the appearance of a new style, some other work anterior to it

would have been chosen. Monteverde is a landmark precisely because his achievement made an unimportant thing important.

There is much more in 'Orfeo' than bold harmonies and lively rhythms. The beauty of the melodic line cannot fail to be a continual object of admiration, and the aptness of the harmonic commentary never ceases to delight. Abrupt chord sequences were not new, and there are parallels in Peri for the more daring progressions in 'Orfeo.' It is their appropriateness, dictated by the mind of a sensitive and thoughtful musician, that makes them significant and beautiful. Again, the composition of the orchestra of 'Orfeo' was no new and striking device. Combinations of instruments equally, as it seems, haphazard and strange, had been in use for years. The orchestra which played the *intermezzi* in Ariosto's 'Suppositi' (performed at the Vatican in 1518) consisted of fifes, bagpipes, cornets, viols, lutes, flute, and organ. But the idea which inspired the almost barbaric introductory toccata of 'Orfeo,' and the exquisite grace of many of the *ritornelli* for strings are peculiar to Monteverde.

The highly musical recitative of Monteverde developed further into the *aria*. He claimed that the music should arise out of the words, and it is significant that the poetry he set was generally of a high order—Rinuccini, Tasso, Busenello. In spite of the theories of the Florentines, he must have recognised that the musical expression of a situation is often better conveyed by the lyrical rapture of song than by the more formless lines of recitative. Freedom can defeat its own ends, and Monteverde discovered, particularly in the later operas, 'Il Ritorno d'Ulisse' and 'L'Incoronazione di Poppea,' the value of a formal musical framework. Here once again we observe how the possibilities of a new style are apt to become exhausted. Sooner or later development reaches its furthest point and proceeds to return on its own tracks. Thus recitative gives place to frequent lyrical movements, and from these in time arises the set *aria* which dominated later Italian opera.\* In 'Orfeo' the use of song is practically confined to the earlier pastoral scenes. But Orpheus's triumphant outburst when Eurydice has been restored to him by Pluto is, though short, as much an *aria* as the more numerous examples which occur in the later operas. In these, Monteverde draws still further away from the Florentine model on which he had based 'Orfeo.' In 'Il Ritorno d'Ulisse' there are still traces of the earlier style, more especially in the instrumental introductions, but in 'L'Incoronazione di Poppea' his later style finds its complete expression. His songs, which have too often been neglected in favour of the purple patches in his earlier recitative, are as characteristic of the composer and contribute as much to his importance as those features of his style which have attracted more attention in the past.

'Orfeo' has often been praised in modern times, and if the pens of ardent enthusiasts have sometimes written down exaggerations which may afterwards be regretted, there can never be any harm in enthusiasm when the object is worthy of it. No one need, however, be convinced of the

\* It is worth noting that, whereas 'Orfeo' was performed privately at Mantua, both 'Il Ritorno d'Ulisse' and 'Poppea' were performed in the new public theatres of Venice.

value of 'Orfeo' as a musical and dramatic work without the opportunity of seeing it performed. It is always a good thing when one has realised the historical significance of any work of art to be able to derive aesthetic pleasure from it. It is even possible to enjoy it without realising the historical significance. In either case both for those who have disproportioned ideas of the historical significance and for those who are completely ignorant of the work, a performance of 'Orfeo' is an interesting experience. For this reason it will be the first work to be performed in the Festival of Opera which is to be given at the Scala Theatre in London by professional singers and instrumentalists at the end of the year. This article is not to be regarded as an advertisement of that production, but quite simply as a means of recalling to those who have witnessed previous productions the pleasure which they derived from them, and of indicating to those who have not hitherto seen a performance that for many reasons the work is abundantly worth seeing. Subsequent articles will deal with the other operas which are to be presented at the same Festival.

#### THE RIGHTS OF AUTHORS AND COMPOSERS: NEW LEGISLATION IN RUSSIA.

In various ways the Soviet Government of Russia is taking steps to protect and encourage all forms of culture. This attitude of paternalism has its dangers, and in certain directions might become tyrannical, but from the severest of critics of certain aspects of the present regime there can be nothing but praise for the way in which the present Government is giving care and attention to the interests of musicians, authors, and artists.

Authors and composers in Russia have reason to be grateful for new legislation which has recently come into force, which in various important aspects strengthens their rights.

Under the new law the rights of authors and composers are identified with those of employed labour. Hitherto, if a publisher went bankrupt, all his employees were paid off first from any of the realised assets, and the unfortunate authors had to queue up with the remaining creditors, who generally found that there was nothing left after the prior claims had been satisfied. Authors, artists, and composers will now have a first claim in the case of failure of a publisher.

To give authors and composers fuller remuneration for their work, the new law limits the free use of literary, musical, and art works which formerly could without fee be reproduced by a third party without the consent of the author. In view of the many and increasing methods for the mechanical mass reproduction of creative work, this change is of great importance, and enables creative workers to obtain their full share of the rewards made possible by recent advances in inventive science.

Authors in Russia have claimed that they should receive royalties on the translations of their works into other languages, but in view of the fact that so many languages are spoken in Russia, and that therefore translation facilities need to be encouraged for the spread of a common culture, especially among the small minorities which have lived under conditions of political and cultural

oppression, the Russian Government has decided that for the present it cannot acknowledge the exclusive right of the author to the translation of his works.

Authors and composers of unpublished dramatic and musical works retain their rights under the new law. An author under the law of 1925 had no right to prohibit the public performance of published works which had been performed, if only once, and even when the work was only in manuscript. But he had the right to an author's fee, unless admission was free to the performance. The old law guaranteed the rights of composers to a fee for the public performance of their musical compositions only when the works were marked, 'Rights of the composer reserved.' The new law removes this limitation, and provides that the fee shall be given in all circumstances.

Considerable changes have been made in the time-table of authors' rights. Authors' rights to literary and musical works are life-long, with an addition of fifteen years to their heirs.

An important innovation for Russian authors and composers is the fixing by the State of standard terms of contracts with publishers. There previously had been considerable grievance since the Revolution, as at one time State publishers were in a position to dictate almost any terms to the author. The Government has now made provision for the safeguarding of the interests of authors, and for providing better pay and better conditions. The procedure is similar to that adopted in the protection of other forms of labour. Each contract must contain provision for a time limit and a minimum fee according to the size of the edition.

#### THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

BY ARTHUR T. FROGATT

Reading the report of an address delivered by one of our talented young composers in the town in which he resides, a short time ago, I was rather amused to find that he apologised for, or perhaps I ought to say justified, the extraordinary characteristics of much of our modern music, by saying that they reflected the confusion which the great war had generated in every department of human thought and life. I do not remember his exact words, but I believe the above fairly conveys their import. That is to say, the music of to-day expresses the life of to-day, having its genesis in the spirit of the age. When life is humdrum, art is humdrum; when the pools are stagnant, art is stagnant; when the waters become agitated, the arts grow turbulent; when the *vox populi* attains to incoherence, music follows suit.

I have said that this explanation of an undoubted fact rather amused me. Why? Because I think it gives the case away most completely. On the present occasion I am concerned only with music; but if this were the appropriate place, and I had sufficient space for the attempt, I should hope to be able to prove that in all the fine arts it is only mediocrity which reflects the spirit of the age, and that genius aims at something higher and far better. The spirit of the age is commonly trivial, often decidedly bad; and always material, of the earth, earthy. The function of art is to divert the mind of man from that which is merely material, and to lead it to the contemplation of something more ethereal; and art which fails to

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do this is degraded and debased. The mission of art to the soul ( $\psi\nu\chi\eta$ ) is similar to that of Christianity to the spirit ( $\pi\nu\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha$ ) of man, namely, to uplift; and, therefore, has little or nothing in common with the spirit of the age. But the man of mediocre talent, who is destitute of inspiration, who has no message for mankind, but nevertheless desires to dabble in art, finds only two courses open to him: either he must content himself with producing a pale reflection of what others have done before, or else he must yield himself to the spirit of the time, and swim with the tide. There are, of course, exceptions to every rule, but I believe it to be true that art, in its highest manifestations, like religion, is almost invariably opposed to the general tendency of human conduct.

The 16th century was a time of upheaval. From various causes, foreign to our subject, the authority of the Church, the oldest institution in Europe, was called in question. The greatest revolution which Europe had seen since the overthrow of the Western Empire was the consequence. And many other changes were imminent. A new world had been discovered; the literature of ancient Greece had established itself in the universities of the Occident; and the great movement of the Renaissance, mainly pagan in character, had become an accomplished fact. The current of human thought and feeling was diverted into various unexplored channels. How did these things affect the great musicians of the century? Take four of the greatest, from as many different nations: Palestrina (1514-94), Orlando di Lasso (1520-94), Vittoria (1540-1603), and Byrd (1542-1623). What do we find in their works? Nothing revolutionary, nothing that is not a legitimate development of ideas which appear to have originated in the Old French school about the close of the 11th century, expanded and handed down through the intervening generations by such men as Dufay, Okeghem, and Josquin de Prés. And most of the music composed by the 16th-century masters is written for the Church. Even their secular works, whether vocal or instrumental, reflect nothing of the restless spirit of the age.

The first half of the 18th century was not a period, one would suppose, in which high artistic ideals would be likely to be realised. An absence of enthusiasm, extreme artificiality, indifference to or contempt for religion, and a general worship of materialism were among its most striking characteristics. Frederick the Second, called the Great, the disciple of Voltaire, one of the ablest and most unprincipled men that ever wore a crown, may well be taken for its representative. And there were many musicians then flourishing—their works, if not their names, long since forgotten—who faithfully reflected the spirit of the age. But there was one who followed a less remunerative line of conduct. The 'St. John' Passion, the 'St. Matthew' Passion, the B minor Mass, and the Christmas Oratorio have nothing in common with their century. Like St. Paul, they were 'born out of due time.' As Emil Naumann well puts it, 'Bach represents the completion and perfection of Catholic and Christian tonal art-development during the Middle Ages and the epoch of the Reformation.' In what was possibly the most worldly of all past centuries (of course, I am referring only to the Christian era), we hail the

appearance of the most sublime sacred music ever written. No greater contrast between the genius of a man and the spirit of the age in which he lived could be conceived. As Gumprecht has said, 'If ever a man served his art for the love of God, truly it was John Sebastian Bach.'

The first half of the 18th century was a time of trouble and anxiety for this country. A foreign dynasty on the throne, disturbance in Ireland, two rebellions in Scotland, the South Sea Bubble, wars with France and Spain, the suppression of convocation, and a general indifference to religion combine to make anything but an attractive picture. Yet we find nothing of all this turmoil reflected in the music of our most eminent composers, such as Weldon, Croft, Greene, and Travers. Moreover, it was in 1741 that the noblest piece of sacred music ever written in England was penned. There is very little of the spirit of the age in 'The Messiah'! That spirit is undoubtedly felt in Handel's operas, and in some of his instrumental works; but scarcely at all in the compositions by which he is chiefly remembered.

The second half of the 18th century saw the dawn of modern music. The long train of Haydn's String Quartets commenced in 1755, and the still longer train of his Symphonies in 1759. The regeneration of the opera was inaugurated by Gluck with 'Orfeo' in 1762. Mozart's career as a composer, in full brilliance, may be said to commence early in 1778, when the beautiful Sonata in A minor was written.

Men's minds during this period were, no doubt, beginning to assimilate new ideas, largely owing to the work of the French encyclopedists; but these three musicians, by far the greatest of their time, were well in the forefront. A few thinkers, like Arthur Young, discerned the indications of the coming storm, but the Revolution was still in the distance. If any real connection can be established between the life-work of these three and the upheaval of the French Revolution, it cannot be maintained for a moment that the former was inspired by the latter. As regards Gluck, his last operas were produced in 1779, ten years before the eventful meeting of the States General. Mozart, it is true, died during the time of the Revolution, and Haydn lived to see the end of it, but it may safely be said that it made no difference to the creative work of either. I suppose the most terrible deeds of Mozart were, firstly, the two false relations in the Adagio of the String Quartet in C (K. 465), and secondly, the augmented octave in the Overture to 'Don Giovanni'; and as the Quartet was written in 1785 and the opera in 1787, the crimes of the Girondists and Jacobins cannot have been the remote cause of either. Nor do I think that dear old father Haydn showed much partiality for revolutionary ideas, unless the introduction of clarinets into his later works may be so regarded.

And what of Beethoven? Unlike the great three mentioned above, Beethoven was not an explorer of new paths. On the contrary, it was his mission, in the domain of instrumental music, to continue the work of Haydn and Mozart, raising it to such heights as no other has ever attained, or (I believe) ever will attain. No great artist was ever less inspired by the events of the time in which he lived than was Beethoven.

With the exception of a few vocal pieces, his only composition of this kind was 'Wellington's Victory,' written to celebrate the battle of Vittoria, and generally regarded as his worst effort. He certainly intended to dedicate the 'Heroic Symphony' to Napoleon, but soon changed his mind, tore out the page on which the name was written, and in the end dedicated the work to Prince von Lobkowitz.

Whether there was a psychological relationship between the new ideas of Gluck and Haydn, and the novel theories which eventuated in the French Revolution, is a question which I do not propose to discuss at the present moment. But undoubtedly the operas of Richard Wagner must be taken as among the many signs of the sudden rise of a new German Empire. Here, again, it is to be observed that the music which was to dominate Europe for so many years did not derive its inspiration from the German hegemony of the nations ; it manifestly could not do so, for it preceded it by several years. The new German Empire, Bismarck's Germany, was the result of three successful wars, waged by Prussia against Denmark, Austria, and France respectively.

Now, 'The Flying Dutchman' was written in 1841, and produced in 1843 ; 'Tannhäuser' was completed and performed in 1845 ; 'Lohengrin' was completed in 1848 and performed in 1850 ; 'The Rhinegold' was completed in 1854, 'The Valkyre' in 1856, and 'Tristan and Isolde' in 1859. The war between Austria and Prussia on the one hand and Denmark on the other occurred in 1864—a mere preliminary to what was to follow. 'Siegfried' and 'The Mastersingers' were commenced some years before that war ; so also were the first sketches of 'The Dusk of the Gods' and 'Parsifal.' The war between Prussia and nearly all the other States of the Germanic Confederation took place in 1866 : 'The Mastersingers' was performed in 1868. And, finally, in 1870, came the war between France and Prussia.

There is one remarkable parallel existing between the Wagnerian operas and the empire so laboriously established by Bismarck, namely, very considerable *cuts* have been made in the operas and also in the Empire. Whether these cuts will ever be restored I will not venture to prophesy. I will only say that I would rather see them replaced in the operas than restored to the Empire. But I venture to hope that I have been able to prove the position which I set out to substantiate : that the highest musical genius has never been inspired by passing events ; that, on the contrary, it has found its inspiration in crowning the past or else in heralding the future.

#### SYMPHONIES AND THE ORDINARY MAN BY HERVEY ELWES

In Mr. Galsworthy's delightful novel 'The White Monkey,' written some seven or eight years ago, Michael Mont, referring to his contention that the public at that time were not nearly so emancipated as the members of his own set seemed to think, says to his wife, 'D'you know, only one hundred and fifty thousand people in this country have ever heard a Beethoven Symphony ? How many, do you suppose, think old B. a back number ? Five thousand, perhaps, out of forty-two millions. How's that for emancipation ? '

Where Michael Mont (and Mr. Galsworthy) got these figures from I don't know. One thing, however, that's quite certain is that the musical emancipation of the masses has become much more general during the last few years. Since a wireless pole began to form a somewhat disturbing feature of nearly every back garden, thousands of people must have listened, with pleasure or otherwise according to their individual temperaments, to quite a number of symphonies. How often these people will have to hear the symphonies of Beethoven before they 'think old B. a back number' is an interesting question.

Some of the professional critics have already reached that stage. One of them said recently, he wished the fifth Symphony might never be performed again. But the ordinary, musically-inclined man is likely to regard the prospect of hearing the fifth Symphony much in the same way as did Barbellion, the author of 'The Journal of a Disappointed Man.' And he will probably consider it a matter for additional rejoicing if, as in Barbellion's case, the seventh Symphony is also in the programme.

Before the concert began I was in a fever,' wrote Barbellion. 'I kept on saying to myself, "I am going to hear the fifth and seventh Symphonies." I regarded myself with the most ridiculous self-adulation—I smoothed and purred over myself—a great contented tabby cat ; and all because I was so splendidly fortunate as to be about to hear Beethoven's fifth and seventh Symphonies.'

Anyone who sets out to hear a symphony or two in that frame of mind is bound to gain happiness from the experience ; and 'the days that make us happy make us wise,' as Mr. John Masefield says. At the time of writing, even I am feeling just a little wiser than I did yesterday, because last night I was 'so splendidly fortunate' as to hear *three* symphonies !

It is true, I could not go to Queen's Hall, to listen to and to watch the Hallé Orchestra playing the 'Unfinished' of Schubert, Beethoven's seventh Symphony, and Brahms's fourth. But as the music came through to me in my own room, it was a sheer delight ! One wondered, however, why the 'Brahms' was put last. It seemed a little too much like having the joint brought on at dinner after all the lighter courses had been consumed.

The younger generation of to-day are to be envied because of the chances of happiness they will have in the future in hearing much symphonic music by really fine, *permanent* orchestras. And now that it is no longer the custom, wherever young people are gathered together, to regard musicians as, necessarily, niminy-piminy nonentities, there is rapidly developing in the minds of many boys and girls a distinct tendency to listen with intelligent interest to good music, and to enjoy it—if they can.

I had a letter the other day from a public school-boy—a quite normal boy, with a wholesome sense of humour and a strong liking for any form of diversion that takes him out-of-doors. During his earlier years he received little encouragement to cultivate a taste for music. But a sympathetic housemaster has now provided both the encouragement and the opportunity. This is shown in the following extract from the boy's letter :

Mr. —— has recently taken to letting us play his gramophone practically whenever we want to. It is even more enjoyable than you would suppose, for he has a beautiful gramophone, and lots of records of the big classical works—not merely extracts, but complete, in albums. He has all Beethoven's Symphonies, which I like better than anything. Mozart's String Quartets and Symphonies come next with me, I think. They seem to me the most tuneful things I have ever heard.'

In a comparatively short time this boy will become a business *man*—a very ordinary man, probably, where music is concerned. Yet he will certainly be one of those people who, though they may have little inside knowledge of the world of music, are nevertheless well worth the consideration of all those who compose music and of those who perform it.

A man may hardly have drawn a line since the scribbling days of his boyhood. But, if he has a taste for art, he will intensely enjoy studying the works of the older and the newer schools of painting. The fact that he has only the haziest idea of how the artists get their effects in the various mediums in which they work does not prevent the non-expert from gaining an immense amount of pleasure from all sorts of pictorial art—provided it is good of its kind.

In the same way, anyone with a *feeling* for music can, and frequently does, obtain not only pleasure but mental stimulus from symphonic music, though he may know nothing about the technical construction of the works he hears. If, for instance, a superior person tells him that Schubert's last Symphony is not altogether satisfactory—partly because, instead of being content with a few tunes and developing them in various ways, Schubert strung a number of tunes together, and partly because the work is so long—the ordinary man will probably reply that he thoroughly enjoys Schubert's torrent of delightful tunes; and as to length—well, this symphony does not seem to him nearly as long as some much shorter works by those modern composers who meander so aimlessly that they become bores after about five minutes.

That playful cynic, Mr. Bernard Shaw, once said, 'Hell is full of musical amateurs.' One hopes this is an exaggeration! There must, however, surely be some intermediate stage, where musical amateurs (and, of course, amateur critics) will be given a certain amount of disciplinary training before they are allowed to come in any way in contact with the *Choir Invisible*. And what about the professional critics? Even in their exalted ranks there are some who, sooner or later, ought to receive a little mild chastening.

Many readers will remember with what an outburst of enthusiasm Tchaikovsky's 'Pathetic' Symphony was greeted when first it was performed. But, after hearing it often enough to stale its emotional appeal, the critics changed their minds; and during recent years we have frequently been informed that the tragedy and the pathos which seems so impressive to those who hear the work for the first, or even for the second time, is no more pathetic or tragic than a child afraid of the dark, or a man suffering from a fit of the spleen. In fact, the critics appear to be rather surprised that, as they have now labelled the thing 'blurb,'

any orchestra should have the temerity to keep it in its *répertoire*.

But they should remember that even under present conditions of musical emancipation there are still a large number of people who have never yet heard the 'Pathetic' Symphony. At a first acquaintance, it may be, this symphony will sound just as *pathetic* to these people as it did to the critics of some twenty years ago: although, as a result of the war years, there is a healthy tendency nowadays to keep sentiment and sentimentality well apart.

To the ordinary man art is art, and life is life. When he visits a theatre he may be deeply moved by a tragedy, or greatly entertained by a comedy. But he doesn't think it inevitable that the author of the former lived (or is living) in a state of constant gloom; or that the writer of the comedy must needs be one of those tiresome fellows who are always merry and bright at breakfast time.

The modern mania for prying around among the less savoury details, moral and physical, in the lives of the great composers is no doubt perfectly justifiable if the object of the search is mainly historical. For it is, of course, absurd, as well as misleading, to write a 'life' of anyone, whether he is a musician or a muffin-man, and gloss over, or altogether omit to refer to, certain faults of temperament and bodily and mental infirmities which were only too painfully obvious to those who had anything to do with the subject of one's study. The ordinary man, however, prefers to listen to music as a series of sounds rather than as a series of symptoms. He refuses to use one ear, so to speak, to take in the beauties of the music, and the other to listen for anything in the work being performed which may suggest the composer was in the habit of beating his wife, or that he suffered from housemaid's knee.

The happiest music-lover is he who regards music as a sanctuary—a way of retreat from what a child once described as the 'hussell and bussell' of every-day life. This feeling is exquisitely expressed by Mr. de la Mare in the first two lines of his poem, 'Music':

'When music sounds, gone is the earth I know,  
And all her lovely things even lovelier grow.'

#### THE FOLK-SONG MOVEMENT

BY ROBERT H. HULL

It appears that the more extravagant phases of the folk-song revival in England are now at an end, and in that event it may be possible to estimate the gains and losses of the movement with greater impartiality than one could reasonably expect when the controversy was at its height.

The subject of this controversy has been, curiously, not so much folk-music itself as the means by which it has been exploited. On this point there is ground for a common grievance. Whether or no one commends the wholesale revival of music, some of which through sheer dullness and poverty is probably better forgotten, there would be general agreement, one imagines, as to the reprehensibility of employing folk-music as a sort of illegitimate bait for enterprises whose connection with music is fairly remote. There is community singing, for instance. Apart from those of its exponents whose musical standing is beyond question, there have been others whose

concern has been advertisement pure and simple. The unlucky folk-song is dragged in as an enticement to the public and as an official chaperone for any revived war-songs or hymns which may appear in the same programme. The proceedings, thus camouflaged, are allowed to continue without fear of interruption.

This may sound like the worst form of musical snobbery, but nothing could be further from the writer's intention. If the folk-song deserves something better than a public mauling it is not, on the other hand, of a nature so rare and precious as to justify its being surrounded by an atmosphere of refined pseudo-art. Such, only too often, is its misfortune.

We have in this country Leagues and Societies whose avowed aim is to perform folk-music and folk-dances. One could not reasonably quarrel with the intention did not its practical translation frequently provoke the critic to expostulate. In the matter of folk-songs alone, the performance is often vested with a significance and mysterious importance which a much more elaborate production would scarcely justify. The label 'folk-song' is regarded as a talisman capable of sustaining any attack. It seems to be, in some cases, literally a matter of luck whether the tunes are of the first or the worst order. This bran-tub system is by no means uncommon. Where discrimination should be most vital it is, more often, entirely lacking. One hears the same complaint in connection with the music revived and performed at the Haslemere Festivals. The examples are in some respects parallel. In both cases the result is that poor and worthless music severely handicaps, simply through juxtaposition, other works which may be excellent. The possibilities of this misfortune are too obvious to require further comment.

A less tangible though more serious result of the movement has been the incorporation of folk-tunes into the considered works of some of the leading composers of this country. That the tendency is widespread is beyond dispute. The defence has been put forward that the idiom of certain composers is of so 'national' a character that this adoption—to put it mildly—of folk-tunes is to be regarded in their case as legitimate. This argument scarcely carries conviction. Elgar, to mention one example only, is in his finest achievements unmistakably 'national' in the best sense, but his reputation does not rest upon acquired or artificial melody. Nor, it may be suggested, does the best work of Vaughan Williams. There is, however, this difference. In the case of Elgar the individuality is a certainty; with Vaughan Williams it may become an accident. Any student with a moderate inventive ability can write synthetic folk-music literally by the yard; its creation does not require abnormal intelligence. Vaughan Williams and Holst may be to some extent the victims of circumstances in the media which they employ, but their choice of means and, above all, the method of its employment, must necessarily cause the critic to view their endeavours with apprehension.

It would be futile to deny that there are recorded instances of folk-song employed in such a manner that the excellence of the craftsmanship may excuse the adoption. Delius's 'On hearing the first cuckoo in Spring,' based on a Norwegian

folk-song, is one example; 'Brigg Fair' is another. But for one composer who succeeds many others fail, and one would not care to justify the method as a general principle. It may be that I am over-estimating the dangers likely to arise from this dependence. Alternatively, it seems a matter for concern that there is, in the present music of this country, a marked tendency to economise original thought. Fortunately there are still a number of composers, many of them young, who are as yet untouched by the influence. It is to them that one must look for any chances that may remain for a Renaissance.

One would emphasise that in respect to the finest folk-music of this country there is no praise too high. It is difficult to exaggerate the value of the scholarly research which has brought so much of this music into prominence. The complaint against the movement is, however, two-fold. In the first place there is little attempt at differentiation between what is first-rate and what is undisputedly worthless; secondly, folk-music, admirable as it may be in its proper context, has been exalted to a position which it was never intended to occupy, or, as in some cases, misused in a fashion which may well have caused the pioneers of the movement to turn in their graves. It may be only a matter of time before the present exponents recover their sense of proportion. There are signs that this is the case. Meanwhile our concern is that they should not leave too unsightly a mark upon the music of this country as a memorial to their less controlled activities.

## Gramophone Notes

By 'DISCUS'

H.M.V.

It was with some trepidation that I put on the records of the Philadelphia Orchestra playing Beethoven's seventh Symphony, conducted by Stokowski. (These crack American orchestras too often underline for my taste.) Having got to the end of this set, score in hand, I am glad to be able to give it almost undiluted praise. I do not see eye to eye with Stokowski in the matter of pace, however. I feel certain that he makes the Trio of the Scherzo too deliberate—a definitely slow rate instead of the *meno presto* marked by the composer. And he is inclined to slacken the pace at quiet passages. This is a temptation to which almost all conductors succumb. Perhaps they won't plead guilty; probably they will defend themselves with that blessed word 'interpretation.' But when the composer has ensured all the contrast that is necessary by reducing power and by writing a theme which, being in notes of greater value, already gives an effect of reduced pace, I can never see why it is necessary to *rallentando* as well, especially when the composer expresses no desire for such a slowing up. Beethoven, we know, was very careful in all his indications, and if he wanted a *rallentando* we may be sure he would have marked it. Apparently the time is approaching when a composer will have to take preventive measures, and sprinkle his pages (especially points where quiet subjects are concerned) with the direction *non rall.* In saying this I do not, of course, press for too rigid a following of the copy; but when

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we find, as we do, nine conductors out of ten (even the most famous), and a similar proportion of instrumental soloists, guilty of such an obvious fault, it is time to protest.

In regard to power there is not much ground for complaint in this performance. We could do with a little more soft playing—especially in the slow movement, where the scaling is generally too high. Some of it has the effect of a triumphal march, and in one or two places the absence of *pp* and *p* interferes with the grading up to *f* and *ff*. In the Finale, where Beethoven calls for *fff* (one of the few occasions on which he used this mark, and therefore a point of which much should be made), there is, as usual, practically no difference between the *ff* and *fff*. I am always surprised that conductors do not somehow manage to keep a little power up their sleeve to bring out at these climaxes.

The good points of this performance are many. I do not recall a hearing that has given me a fuller realisation of the rightness of Wagner's label of this Symphony as 'the apotheosis of the dance.' From start to finish it is tremendously alive. The Scherzo, barring the matter of pace in the Trio, is tip-top. For spirit and clarity it could hardly be beaten. In the Finale for once in a way we hear the theme of the strings. In most performances, at first hand and by gramophone alike, the actual subject of the movement is allowed to be drowned by the brass. The brass parts in this Finale are in fact amongst the ugliest in all Beethoven. In this performance one is unconscious of the defect. (The trouble of course was not due to Beethoven, but to the limitations of the instruments; it is left for conductors to ameliorate the fault.)

The best tribute I can pay this recording is to say that I have rarely enjoyed the Symphony so much; so stimulating was the playing that in the necessary journeys to and from the gramophone to change the records I almost skipped my way. I ought to add that the tone of the strings is, as usual, over keen. We expect this as one of the prices we pay for electrical recording, but we should pay only under protest. Too complacent an acceptance of a very real defect will encourage the companies to be content with what is, after all, a distortion. We must keep pegging away until the string tone is as faithfully reproduced as that of the wood-wind. (By the way, in the middle of the Finale something has gone wrong with the recording for a few seconds. I have tried it again and again without being able to discover the cause of the trouble, but there is a bad mix-up for about two revolutions. It may, of course, be peculiar to my sample, but I mention it in case it is not.) (D1639, 1640-43).

Those who like the Gluck-Mottl Ballet Suite (I don't) will enjoy it as recorded with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra playing, conducted by Blech (D1529).

It is pleasant to find Kreisler playing something worth recording. Here he is with Rachmaninov as partner in Grieg's Violin and Pianoforte Sonata in C minor. The honours go to the violinist. In a perfect performance of a duet Sonata they should be shared exactly. I do not like Rachmaninov's pianoforte tone, and too often he allows the violin part to be over-prominent. Nevertheless, there is much that is enjoyable in the performance. The C minor is perhaps the least lyrical of the three

sonatas of Grieg. Nevertheless, it has its lyrical moments, and I feel that these might be made more of. The performance strikes me as being too consistently strenuous (DB1259-61).

There are a couple of good pianoforte records. Paderewski is heard in a couple of old friends very much alike in character—Chopin's *Valse Brillante*, Op. 18, and Rubinstein's *Valse Caprice*. The vitality and power here more than make up for some tone that, as usual with Paderewski, is but so-so (DB1273).

Far more interesting on the musical side, and excellent both in playing and reproduction, is the record of Moisiewitsch in Brahms's E flat Rhapsody and Ravel's 'Jeux d'eau' (D1648).

An organ record above the average is that of G. D. Cunningham playing, at St. Margaret's, Westminster, a Bourrée of Handel and Gigout's Scherzo in E. The Handel becomes a little monotonous by the time the end is reached (Handel's fault—too much repetition). The Gigout piece is capitally touched off; the registration is well chosen, and the lively pace is achieved without muddle (C1650).

I suppose the star turn among vocal records this month will be that of Rosa Ponselle in 'Casta Diva.' I can't get up much enthusiasm; the music is uninteresting. There is no mistaking the excellence of the singer, but it is a pity the soft effect on the first side gives one an impression of remoteness (or as if the tone were enclosed in a swell-box) rather than actual soft singing. (This defect is perhaps peculiar to my sample.) The performance is with the Metropolitan Opera House and Chorus, conducted by Setti (BD1280).

Rudolf Bockelmann is a baritone whose voice takes one captive immediately. He is recorded in the Toreador's song from 'Carmen' and the Mirror Song from 'Tales of Hoffmann,' with the Berlin State Opera House Orchestra, conducted by Clemens Schmalstich. His rich, well-coloured tone makes one almost forget the oddity of hearing the familiar 'Toreador' sung in German (C1680).

It is a pity that Rosette Anday spoils her fine contralto voice with so consistent a wobble. She sings an air of Handel, and 'Erbarme dich mein Gott' from the 'St. Matthew' Passion, with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Alwin. The violin obbligato in the Bach is beautifully played by Franz Malrecker (D1664).

If prizes were given for power this month's blue riband would go to Benvenuto Franci, who makes the rafters ring with a couple of arias from 'La Gioconda.' He is accompanied by La Scala Orchestra, conducted by Savagno, which plays up so well to his vociferous example that it should certainly have the second prize (DB1117).

John Goss sings at his best in a couple of records of old songs—'Flow not so fast,' 'There is a garden in her face,' 'O eyes, O mortal stars,' and 'Come, my Celia.' These are accompanied on the lute by Diana Poulton. I shall no doubt be expected to go into raptures over the lute, and to prefer it to the pianoforte for accompanying purposes. At the risk of disappointing the purists and of being called a Philistine, I vote for the pianoforte. The tinkling lute is pleasant, but inadequate as an accompaniment to a substantial baritone voice (B2822). By the way, the labelling staff has excelled itself in connection with this record. The songs are all ascribed on the label to a composer

new to me—Hesseltine. I take it that this means that the songs are sung from the edition made by Phillip Hesseltine. Anyway, if we are to have the wrong composer's name we might at least have the right spelling.

Paul Robeson sings four more 'spirituals': 'Git on board, lil' children,' 'Dere's no hidin' place,' 'Oh! rock me, Julie,' and 'Oh! didn't it rain.' These will please those who still have a palate for this overworked type. Robeson's singing tends to become monotonous through his choice of an invariably low pitch. Apparently he is unable to manage top notes comfortably—at all events that is my impression after hearing him in a record containing some high notes. His magnificent voice seems to have been inadequately trained, and so he is safe and comfortable only on the ground floor (B3033).

There are two choral records, which, though good, are not wholly satisfying. The Westminster Abbey Special Choir is heard in Byrd's magnificent 'Exsurge Domine,' and William Child's 'O bone Jesu,' the latter with organ accompaniment. There are some good expressive touches in the Child (this Motet is probably the best example of his work), but in the Byrd there is a lack of power and climax. Anyway, I am not thrilled by it as I was by the old record of this work made by the English Singers. So we see that numbers matter less than is generally supposed (C1678).

The Dayton U.S.A. Choir, conducted by John Finley Williamson, sing pieces by Lotti and Palestrina with fair success. Their arrangement of the slow movement from Dvorák's 'New World' Symphony to a feeble text, 'Goin' home,' may be very popular in the States, but I do not think it will make many friends here. Tonally, and indeed in every way, this record does the choir less than justice. I heard them sing the same works at the Albert Hall, and the gramophone gives but little idea of their unusually fine vocal resources and finished singing (D1647).

#### COLUMBIA

Unusually brilliant and powerful is the Hallé Orchestra's record of Rimsky-Korsakov's 'Capriccio Espagnole,' conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty. This is the kind of lavish power that I can always enjoy, because it is not mere noise, and the playing is first-rate (9716-17).

From time to time we hear snatches of Johann Strauss's opera, 'Der Fledermaus,' and they are usually of a quality to make us wish to hear the whole work. Here is the Overture, a capital, lively piece of light music played by the Berlin State Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter (L2311).

I found Saint-Saëns's 'Le Rouet d'Omphale,' as played by the Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, Paris, conducted by Gaubert, less interesting than usual. It seems to need a more varied performance (9719).

Having found fault with the Capet String Quartet's playing of some late Beethoven, I am glad to be able to give them high praise for their performance of the Quartet in A, Op. 18. They exhibit here far more life and variety. I part company with them, however, in the matter of the pace of the Minuet. They play it far too slowly, I feel. It has the effect almost of a slow

movement, with the result that the Andante that follows cannot make its proper contrast. Granted that most people play classical minuets too quickly, there is still a difference between stateliness and actual slowness (D1659).

The Madam Quartet of mandolines and guitars play an arrangement of a Giga by Vivaldi, and an Andante Mosso by Scarlatti. Of these I prefer the latter. The Giga is rather too sedate in pace, and it is surely a mistake to make a pronounced *rallentando* at one point. If there is one movement that ought to be continuously fast from start to finish it is a jig (5396).

Records of the Sheffield Choir have hitherto disappointed me somewhat. Here are a couple that are really excellent and do something like justice to the singers. Sir Henry Coward made a good choice of four choruses from 'Judas Macabaeus,' and he has done well to include among them 'See the conqu'ring hero comes.' There is much brilliant singing, and the orchestral part, especially the trumpet, is unusually effective. The ensemble goes awry in a couple of points near the end of 'Sing unto God,' but the flaws are easily forgiven in view of the excellence of the remainder (9724).

#### PARLOPHONE

Some unusually good samples are here, especially in regard to surface. I have not for a long time heard such a near approach to noiseless running. The best orchestral record is that of the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch, playing the 'Waltz Scene' from Richard Strauss's 'Intermezzo.' This is glowing and brilliant work (E10860).

No less good as a record, though of less interest from the musical point of view of most of us, is a record of the same players, conducted by Dr. Weissmann, in the 'Dance of the Hours' from 'La Gioconda' (E10859).

The pick of the basket, however, is the batch of three records giving us the first two movements of Dvorák's 'Cello Concerto, played by Emanuel Feuermann with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Michael Taube. The work is generally admitted to show Dvorák at his best, and it receives full justice here from both playing and recording points of view. I have rarely enjoyed records more than these. The balance is not quite flawless, but a little over-prominence on the part of the soloist is excusable, owing to the problem of ensuring that the 'cello shall stand out from the strings of the orchestra. But the orchestral part is never allowed to be obscure, and the wood-wind in the quieter passages is a delight (E10856-57-58).

There are two excellent records of extracts from 'Der Rosenkavalier,' the soloists being Meta Seinemeyer, Grete Merrem-Nikisch, and Emanuel List in 'Nicht dort, dort ist das Vorzimmer,' and 'Bin con so viel Finesse charmier' (E10864); and Meta Seinemeyer, Elsa Stunzner, and Grete Merrem-Nikisch in 'Mein Gott, s'war mehr wie eine Farce,' and 'Hab' mir's gelobt ihn Lieb zu haben' (E10865), all with the Berlin State Opera House Orchestra conducted by Weissmann. These records would be hard to beat as examples of fine ensemble work.

Similar high praise must be given to a record of the Finale of Act 2 of 'Der Fledermaus' by the other Strauss, Johann, and with the same orchestra

and conductor, the singers being Lotte Lehmann, Karin Branzell, Grete Merrem-Nikisch, Richard Tauber, and Waldemar Staegemann (R20085).

## DECCA

Apparently these are the first Decca records, the company having hitherto been indentified only with the manufacture of gramophones. The batch shows enterprise and variety. The recording generally is excellent, but the surface in some cases leaves something to be desired. The most ambitious effort is Delius's 'Sea Drift.' Few choral works present more formidable difficulties from a recording point of view. There is not only the problem of balance between the soloist, chorus, and orchestra. The music itself is of an elusive type that can be only partially captured by the gramophone, even under the most favourable conditions. In fact, I do not recall a single example of a Delius recording that is as indisputably successful as are the best examples of works by other composers. These considerations must be borne in mind when judging this Decca reproduction. It gives us much that is beautiful, but the definition is not sufficiently good for the average hearer who is ignorant of the work. The words of the chorus are vague, and even those of the excellent soloist, Mr. Roy Henderson, are heard only fitfully. As I happen to know the work well I was able to supply many details mentally, but even so I feel that a vocal score is a necessary aid. Armed with this, the gramophonist will derive great pleasure from these records of what many of us regard as Delius's most beautiful work. The orchestra is the New Symphony, the choir is simply 'Choir,' and the conductor is unnamed—oddly, for he has an unusually arduous and responsible task (S10010-12).

Several orchestral records have been made by the Hastings Municipal Orchestra, conducted by Basil Cameron. I like best that of the Overture to Offenbach's 'Orpheus in the Underworld,' which is played with vigour and brilliance (T101).

Friedmann's Slavonic Rhapsody, arranged by Woodhouse, strikes me as being uninteresting music (M2).

Nor am I very favourably struck by No. M1, which gives us Gabriel-Marie's 'Sérénade Badine' and Walton O'Donnell's Pizzicato. As the former exploits *pizzicato* too, we have rather an overdose of a device which soon loses its effect. These records were made in the New White Rock Pavilion, which shows itself to be excellent for recording purposes.

The list mentions a 'Jutish Medley' (Danish folk-songs) by Percy Grainger, also conducted by Mr. Cameron, but the record was not included in my parcel. I mention it on the strength of the promising title (A1002).

There is a good military band record of Suppé's 'Light Cavalry' Overture, and the ubiquitous 'Dance of the Hours' from 'La Gioconda,' conducted by Julian Clifford (M25).

The 'Bell Song' from 'Lakmé' is sung with some lack of polish by Olga Olgina, who has an unusually good voice (S10002).

Dale Smith sings well in three of Vaughan Williams's 'Songs of Travel.' The effect would have been better with pianoforte. The orchestral accompaniment is not only unnecessary; it is

also too loud, and at times almost drowns the singer (M35).

Tom Kinniburgh's excellent voice is heard in 'The Road to the Isles' (a poorish tune despite its Hebridean origin), and the 'Piper o' Dundee.' He sings the latter too slowly and seriously for my taste. (Perhaps I have been spoilt by having heard some very racy performances of this song by pawky folk-singers at Scottish Competition Festivals (M10).)

The St. Peter's Singers (male voices) sing neatly Beale's 'This pleasant month of May,' and a 'spiritual,' 'Heav'n, heav'n.' The voices are good, but I still cannot overcome my distaste for the male alto voice in the abstract. All male-voice parties should aim at a tenor lead (M9).

There is an abundant supply of Fox-trots and other similar fare, but they do not come within the scope of this review.

## NATIONAL GRAMOPHONIC SOCIETY

Debussy's Sonata for violin and pianoforte is on so small a scale that Sonatina would be a fitter title. Andre Mangeot and Lisle Barbour give it a generally good performance, which suffers from an occasional meagreness of tone on the part of the violinist, especially in some of the quieter passages. The Sonata fills three sides, the odd one being given to Debussy's 'Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir,' played by Lyell Barbour. In both these records, by the way, the surface is less good than usual, a defect that may be responsible for the tonal fault mentioned above (127-128).

The better of the two issues is that of Mozart's D major Sonata (K576), played with delightful crispness and clarity by Kathleen Long. The fourth side of a pair of discs gives us three charming old pieces—a Minuet and Air by Muffat and Couperin's 'Le Tic-Toc-Choc ou Les Mailloots' (129-130).

## NEW OPERAS AT DUISBURG

By OSCAR THOMPSON

Of nine unfamiliar stage works, all in a sense new and all bespeaking some phase of the contemporaneous if not the last word of modernity, only two left other than rapidly-fading recollections with this American visitor at the Duisburg Festival, officially the fifty-ninth Tonkünstlerfest des Allgemeinen Deutschen Musikvereins, of date July 2-7. These two were Arnold Schönberg's 'Die Glückliche Hand,' by no means the bore in the theatre that easy-chair analysis might lead a too-cocksure critic to expect, and Max Brand's glorification of the fly-wheel and of brutality in man, 'Maschinist Hopkins.' Both cultivate assiduously the somewhat morbid appeal that is in the harrowing, the hopeless, the inexorable. Unseen forces whisper in the dark, in one instance the demons of destiny, in the other the voices of machines that become articulate for the purpose of making more startling an eerie murder in their midst. So impelling is the visual element of both works, even though that of 'Die Glückliche Hand' is more phantasy than drama, and cryptic phantasy at best, that the music serves much such scenic purpose as the lights and the stage properties.

That, indeed, was at once the virtue and the fault, chiefly the great fault, of the operas at Duisburg; their dramatic interest utterly transcended their musical importance. Save in the Schönburg opus, there could be little incentive to seek for anything rewarding to the purely musical sense, aside from stage performance of the tonalized plays; and even with respect to the Schönberg, all thought as to its availability for concert projection evaporated in the light of what the stage performance revealed. The score has been sufficiently analysed in the past. It is now some sixteen years old, and its atonality is no longer strange. But in all these years 'Die Glückliche Hand' (if one may accept the information available in Duisburg) had but two stage performances prior to this Festival, one at Vienna, the other at Breslau. There were two at Duisburg, the second being added over-night to the programme when Schönberg came from Berlin to attend it. This was the second time he had heard his work in its sixteen years—once at Vienna, once at Duisburg.

The power of 'Die Glückliche Hand' on the stage is the power of de Maupassant's 'Horla.' It insinuates what cannot be put into words, the nameless terrors that the dark sends shuddering through the blood of children. Its title is quite the strangest symbol of its dark allegory. There is no 'happiness' in this work; every mirage of fortune leads straight to despair. It is agonized, dispiriting, hopeless, and hope-destroying. If the mission of music primarily is a consolatory one, this is no music at all. But the art of its facture, the skill of its suggestion, cannot be put aside.

'Maschinist Hopkins,' like 'Die Glückliche Hand,' has been discussed abroad as the result of some previous performances, given at Duisburg. It has yet to find its way to one of the larger and internationally celebrated opera houses. Possibly it never will. If it does, the hope may be devoutly expressed that everyone concerned, from the impresario to the individual artists and the stage technicians, be sent to Duisburg to learn how it should be done. In all that pertains to *regie*, this and other productions in the Rhineland city were revelations to one who has heard opera in the world capitals. Singers *act* at Duisburg, not in the manner of an exceptional individual star, like Chaliapin, but in a strikingly co-ordinated acting-ensemble, altogether comparable to that of spoken drama. Perhaps they were chosen primarily for dramatic rather than vocal gifts. The works of the Tonkünstlerfest permitted little of what could be called 'song' as criteria for appraisal of the ability to sing. But the voices were used expressively and naturally in a song-speech that possessed an extraordinary finish. In all that pertains to lighting and to stage transformations these were superior performances. Technicians from the great opera houses could, with profit, sit at the feet of the men who put these new works on. The settings were the best examples of the 'ultraist' manner this commentator has encountered anywhere. Like them or loathe them, they were never routine, they had individuality, they manifested ideas.

Separate the music of 'Maschinist Hopkins' from the melodrama which it underscores and makes more lurid, and perhaps only the episodes devoted to the machines would similarly transcend industrious routine. That of the whispered voices

in the machine-room inevitably recalled similar whisperings in 'Die Glückliche Hand,' perhaps unfairly for Brand, since this episode was exceedingly effective in its own right. But are almost toneless whisperings music? The machine shop in full operation had its measure of mechanical fascination, but when the composer turned to the writing of his love music he could only echo the night melos of 'Tristan and Isolde.' His use of jazz to picture a New York night club, and again a low 'dive' known as 'Bondy's Bar' was perhaps a little more idiomatic than Krenek's in the sportive 'Jonny spielt auf.' It characterises—again the 'scenic' in music—but it is inferior, in its kind, to the pot-boiler jazz of a hundred writers of popular music for revues and musical comedies. The chief asset of 'Maschinist Hopkins' is its abundant energy. This the music possesses in consanguinity with the brutal story.

Text-setting apparently engrossed the composers of several others among the Duisburg operas to such a degree as to forbid lyric expansions, either in the vocal writing or the orchestra. The result was not infrequently a drain upon the endurance and the patience of the most willing listener. Hellmut Groop fashioned his 'George Dandin' so faithfully after Molière that his dialogue, line for line, came as near the equivalent of a spoken play as the most literal heart could wish—if, indeed, there are those who sincerely feel that this is the mission of music, on the stage or elsewhere—merely to substitute for speech. Under this endless and fatiguing dialogue was an orchestra that worked its will with the dissonant devices of modern chamber music, sometimes with recognisable commentary on the stage action, more often going its polytonal way—a dry, edged, hard-line-against-hard-line way; its ironics including the semblance of a ballet danced to music without the semblance of ballet music.

Two dramas of classic austerity also challenged attention, and exhausted it, on the basis of text-setting. Emil Peeters's 'Die Troerinnen' interfered only a little with Euripides, as made over into German by Franz Werfel. That little consisted chiefly of making the words less clear, though they were very skilfully fashioned into musical phrases not unlike those of 'Pelléas et Mélisande,' with an instrumental score providing atmosphere in something of the same manner; though, necessarily for the subject, harsher and more positive, and making free use of the harmonic license that has come into music since Debussy's time. 'Die Troerinnen' was something of an achievement; more so, this visitor felt, than Paul Kick-Schmidt's somewhat similar 'Tullia.' This drama of the Romans had an exciting closing scene that was exceedingly deft in its handling, and the endless declamation of the earlier scenes exemplified, no doubt, a considerable measure of skill. But the skilled artisan is not to be confounded with the man who can create beauty, whatever the fashion or the spirit of the time.

In his 'Traumspiel,' Julius Weissmann, no such young man as most of the Duisburg composers, harks back to Mahler. This, indeed, is much such an opera as Mahler might have written if he had turned from the symphony to composition for the stage. It has his mastery of the huge orchestra, his soaring aspirations, his glimpses of the distant ideal, his tendency to tumble out of

similar perhaps exceeding almost shop in mechanical to the ho the use of again a perhaps a sportive in the kind, letters of medies. is its uses in posers ras to either result assurance tenter. in ' so one for in play indeed, is the here— this orchestra devices with action, edged, is in music ened text- inter- over little clear, into as et siding inner; and chonic ssy's of an than illia.' osing ling, enes are of con- duty, such asers, much if he ation huge es of t

the clouds into the street. August Strindberg's verbal symbolism is both a prop and a burden. The metaphor of music, added to the allegory of words, often tends to make opaque what must be transparent if the symbol is to be grasped. Indra's Daughter brings light into a world of heartbreak. But she does not escape its banalities. The orchestra, on occasion, sings of infinite compassion; and the music is best when it is most symphonic—also most Mahleresque.

A facile hand, an engaging fancy, but no very individual musical creation went into Hans Chemin-Petit's 'Der gefangene Vogel,' but as this is the work of a man now but twenty-seven years old, it is perhaps fair to regard it more in the light of promise than of fulfilment. The manner is more Italian than German; the subject, an Oriental phantasy of the fairy-tale order, with pigtailed pagoda, prologue, and after-word. In 'Diana's Hochzeit,' a naughty episode of Southern Spain, Paul Strüver found a métier and milieu of slight resemblance to Ravel's 'L'Heure Espagnol,' but the treatment, orchestrally, is of a full-blooded, even popular tunefulness—the pseudo-Spanish tunefulness that Ravel evaded in the tantalising ironies of his delicate post-impressionism. Strüver might with better success have given some of his tunes to his stage voices. The result would at least have been passable operetta. As satirical opera it misses fire, even as abetted by the whimsical settings and the adroit handling of its changes of scene by the Duisburg *regisseurs*. 'Salambo,' a dance-drama by Hans Tiessen, carried a greater measure of conviction, though it suffered from juxtaposition on a triple bill with 'Die Glückliche Hand.' If the music would scarcely withstand transference to the concert hall, after the fashion of the Stravinsky mimeodramas, it serves its theatre purpose in providing a colourful and mildly stridulous background for the tapestry of love and death which the dance principals weave in an engrossing set of pictures for the eye-minded.

Of the choral and chamber music brought forward at three concerts which were also a part of this surfeit of the new, there is no imperative need to expatiate. Compositions in varying forms came from the pens of Wilhelm Kempff, Otto Crucius, Hans Gebhard, Hans Lang, Philippine Schick, Julius Schloss, Ernst Pepping, Werner Jüllig, Kurt Thomas, Karl Schäfer, Herbert Eimert, Kaspar Roesseling, and Emil Peeters. Frau Schick's 'Der Einsame an Gott,' a cantata for dramatic soprano, lyric baritone, women's chorus, and string orchestra, brought a welcome reminder that there are still composers who are moved to contemplate the spiritual. This cantata is good music, not without reminders of Mahler and Brahms.

### Occasional Notes

What is unvocal music? The current issue of *Music and Letters* contains a symposium on the subject, the writers being Drs. Ernest Walker and E. C. Bairstow, Prof. Dent, and Messrs. Steuart Wilson, Paul England, Gregory Hast, and Owen Colyer. A further instalment is promised for the October number. Although the usefulness of the discussion will depend on the extent to which it is read by composers, it should be added that the

articles contain much that every singer will do well to study. The ground is pretty well covered, despite some shortage of concrete examples; and, as usually happens in discussions of any aspect of singing, there is startling difference of opinion on some points. We take one only. Mr. Gregory Hast says: 'I think most singers will agree that certain vowels are difficult to negotiate in the high registers of the voice,' and gives an instance. *Per contra*, hear Mr. Colyer: 'To protest that it is not always possible to sing the right word on the right note cannot be contemplated. To say, for instance, that a more beautiful tone can be obtained on the E flat on the vowel *a* than on the vowel *e* would be a denial of the singer's birthright, his priceless privilege of words—would put the tickling of the ear above the stimulus of the imagination, would exalt the flesh above the spirit.'

Mr. England takes much the same view. Prof. Dent, however, says: 'Teachers of singing often say that a good singer ought to be able to sing any vowel on any note of his voice, but for practical purposes composers ought to know that each type of voice has its peculiarities in this respect.' Dr. Bairstow goes into practical detail, and shows how and why it is that closed vowels are difficult for women's voices in the high register. We think that most singers and teachers will take the Hast-Dent-Bairstow view, and will agree that composers usually give too little attention to this point. Fine words about the 'singer's birthright' butter no parsnips; they simply ignore physical facts.

(By the way, we are glad to see that *Music and Letters* has obtained more than the hundred subscribers its editor asked for. He returns thanks in the handsomest way by adding ten pages to the July number.)

The winding up of the B.N.O.C. has evoked general regret and sympathy. The company has done much excellent work, but once more it has been proved that a tussle between art and an overdraft can end in only one way, sooner or later—generally sooner. (The winding-up meeting was naturally on an emotional plane—so much so as to present *Punch* with a chance. Tears having been shed, who could resist the obvious opening? Not *Punch*; hence a reference to 'voluntary liquidation.') Happily, the demise of the company occurred just as the Covent Garden Syndicate had decided to send out in the autumn a strong touring company, into which a number of the B.N.O.C. singers will accordingly be absorbed.

In spite of this B.N.O.C. collapse, opera will be almost a drug in the market next season. In addition to the Covent Garden project, Sir Thomas Beecham's Opera League is expected to begin operations; Mr. R. L. Stuart announces a seven-weeks' season at the Scala Theatre; and Capt. Cuthbert Reaveley has issued a booklet giving particulars of an elaborate scheme of performances at certain provincial centres. We have no space to discuss Capt. Reaveley's plans, which are set forth in detail in a booklet entitled 'Civic Opera as the Basis of British Music.' (Readers can no doubt obtain copies on application to Capt. Reaveley at 45, Albany Street, N.W.1.) Last, but a long way from least, the Carl Rosa Company (which has lately been filling the Lyceum with capital performances of old favourites) will be

more than ever on the spot. It is to be hoped that all these promising enterprises will not damage one another through a frequent failing in the English musical world—lack of co-operation in the matter of dates.

These lavish operatic projects, however, seem almost meagre beside the wealth of first-rate orchestral concerts announced to take place at Queen's Hall. In addition to the Promenades, there will be a six-concert Delius Festival (Beecham), twenty-three B.B.C. Symphony Concerts (Beecham, Wood, Ronald, Weingartner), the usual Philharmonic series, nine by the Hallé Orchestra, a set of six sponsored by Mrs. Samuel Courtauld (Sargent and Klemperer), and the regular Monday evening concerts of the L.S.O. The interest, however, does not lie in the mere numbers. For one thing, the standard of playing will almost inevitably be far higher than for many years past. The L.S.O. has been guaranteed three years' full-time work, so there is an end of the deputy system in one quarter at least. Many new works are promised. Thus, at the Courtauld series will be heard symphonies by Mahler and Bruckner, and the B.B.C. concerts will give a good deal that is off the beaten track.

Has London ever had spread before it such an orchestral feast as is in store for 1929-30? We doubt it. If the box office is as busy as it ought to be, mechanised music, so far from killing the public concert, may prove to have been a powerful tonic.

In regard to the 'Promenades,' we are inclined to question one new detail in the arrangements: the giving up of Thursday evenings to contemporary British music. Is this the kind of propaganda our composers need? Do they even need propaganda at all? We think not. Propaganda almost invariably implies and evokes opposition. British composers would be far better served by the regular inclusion of a proportion of their works in the miscellaneous programmes, side by side with established favourites. Their works would then be heard by the average audience, which includes many who would come for the favourite (despite the presence on the programme of a new British work), but who would not be attracted by an all-British concert. The best service we can do our contemporary music would be to lead the average hearer to regard as a matter of course its presence in the best-class orchestral concerts. Moreover, variety being the spice of life, a couple of modern British works in a programme would make better hearing than a half-dozen performed without contrast or relief provided by music of other countries and periods. Nevertheless, although we doubt the wisdom of the all-British evening at the 'Proms,' we are not unappreciative of so handsome a gesture.

Since the above has been set up we have seen a letter in *The Times* from Dr. Vaughan Williams, who takes the same view, regretting the revival of the old distinction between 'music' and 'British music.' British composers, he imagines, 'would prefer that their works should be judged, for praise or blame, side by side with all other music of the past or of the present'; and he ends with the pertinent question, 'Is it still necessary to segregate the "British composer," as if he were unfit.'

In this connection we note that the Liverpool branch of the British Music Society has decided to discontinue its special concerts of contemporary music, owing to members having complained that 'programmes of such music, taken neat, are apt to cause a sort of cerebral indigestion.' The committee will continue to perform as much contemporary music as hitherto, but it will be mixed with other types.

And here is a further little gleam of light on the same subject. In a recent issue of *Musical America* appeared an interview with Mr. Henry Hadley, the conductor. He deplored the comparative neglect of some contemporary American composers, and went on to say: 'When I conducted in Buenos Aires several years ago, it was part of the contract to play at least one Argentine composition in each programme. Strauss and other noted conductors, when they appeared in Latin America, were also forced to subscribe to this provision. I believe it was a good thing. Alien conductors, coming here [New York] for a short stay, harassed for time, haven't the opportunity of finding out whether there is a dormant Beethoven about. They have no time to read a host of manuscripts, and if they *do* play American composers, they are those who have already "arrived."

We should like to see a similar clause in most contracts in this country. Not only would the policy of 'one British work per programme' be good for our own people and our own composers; it would also send visiting conductors back to the Continent better informed as to our music than they are at present.

Several correspondents have challenged us on our attitude towards the poetry of Gertrude Stein. We are told that we don't understand the technique thereof, and so our opinion is presumptuous. It may be so; we must look into it again. For the present, however, we are busy with Miss Stein's prose. Here is a sample from her appreciation of Miss Jane Heap that appeared in a recent issue of the *Little Review*. It is quoted by our lively friend 'Beachcomber,' of the *Daily Express*:

'Jane it is however how had how it tried that it was J. H. or Jane Heap. Jane was her name and Jane her station and Jane her nation and Jane her situation. Thank you for thinking of how do you do how do you like your two per cent. Thank you for thinking how do you do. Thank you Jane thank you too thank you for thinking thank you for thank you. Thank you how do you. Thank you Jane thank you how do you do.'

GERTRUDE STEIN.

Careful study will reveal a fundamental difference between this passage and the lyric we quoted in our April number. Whereas the poem bore some slight signs of being metrical, the rhapsody on Jane is continuous and in one solid chunk. In both, however, are seen the same persevering method of driving facts home. We like, too, the clarity with which the biographical details concerning Miss Heap are set forth, and the skill with which the approach is made to the climax—that little matter of the two per cent. Notable, too, is the artfulness with which the reader is left in doubt as to whether that low rate of interest is

on a loan or a dividend. Thank you, Gertrude, thank you for thinking. How. How do. How do you. How do you do. Thank you. *Thank you and (in order that the point may be quite clear) thank you.*

In the July number of the *Gramophone*, Mr. Percy Scholes enters the lists in support of Mr. Compton Mackenzie's suggestion that the classics would be more popular and more easily identified if they were named instead of opus-numbered. Mr. Scholes heads his article, 'Name this child,' and draws an entertaining picture of Bach numbering his large family instead of naming them. But the analogy is more amusing than convincing. Bach had only a score or so of children (we are always a bit hazy as to the exact total, and perhaps even J. S. B. himself had to think twice about it occasionally). Had they been as numerous as his works he would have found numbering far more convenient than naming. You may number to infinity, whereas you soon reach the end of your tether if you depend on names. We had intended to discuss this matter fully, but as our contributor 'Feste' has done so we confine ourselves to this one practical point.

In regard to the Berlioz controversy, we have in hand an article by Mr. Tom Wotton on 'Berlioz as a melodist.' This will appear soon, and will, we hope, be followed by another on the same subject by Mr. Cecil Gray. We don't think this is too much of a good thing, because anything like a settlement of the dispute can be arrived at only as a result of argument backed up by liberal use of examples.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has conferred the honorary degree of Mus. Doc. on Mr. Hubert W. Hunt, of Bristol Cathedral, and Mr. William Ellis, of Newcastle Cathedral. We join in the congratulations that both will receive from their fellow Church-musicians.

We give readers a perhaps unnecessary reminder that the Worcester Festival begins on September 8, with a programme as full as usual of good things old and new. Among musical features of recent years there are few more significant and encouraging than the astonishing success of the Three Choirs Festival since its revival after the war. Prophets of woe declared that such meetings had had their day, but the courage of the executive in re-starting at Worcester in 1920 has been justified to a degree that even the most optimistic could hardly have foreseen. It is interesting to note the helpful part played by a factor that has generally been regarded as inimical to music—the motor car. A Three Choirs Festival is now attended by many who, thanks to motor transport, are able to come daily from considerable distances, and by others who can travel from remote parts, obtain quarters in the surrounding country, and motor daily to the city.

Another matter for congratulation is the fruition of the Cecil Sharp Memorial Scheme. In 1925 it was decided to build a headquarters for the English Folk-Dance Society. Again there was head-shaking, and again the optimists have scored, for on June 24 the foundation stone was laid by Miss Maud Karpeles, who was Mr. Sharp's honorary secretary for many years. Very appropriately,

her associate in the ceremony was Mr. William Kimber, the Headington bricklayer and folk-dancer who taught Cecil Sharp the morris dance and coached the group of enthusiasts who founded the Society. Lady Ampthill, President of the E.F.D.S., presented to Mr. Kimber a silver and ivory trowel, in recognition of his friendship with Cecil Sharp and his services to the cause. The foundation stone bears the inscription: 'This building is erected in memory of Cecil Sharp, who restored to the English people the songs and dances of their country.'

Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, the chairman of the Memorial Fund, stated that the cost of the freehold and the site of the building—£31,500—had been raised in less than five years. We can imagine no more conclusive evidence as to the genuineness and vitality of the folk-dance revival than the speedy realisation of a project that at its inception seemed so ambitious as to be impracticable.

In this number we give the first of a series of six articles on 'Stages in the History of Opera,' by various authoritative writers. The review of the newly-discovered Violin Sonata of Bach, promised for this month, is held over till next.

Things that might have been more clearly expressed:

'In the contralto class all the eleven entrants appeared to sing "Trees," by Martin Shaw.'—*Local report of Competition Festival.*

We note the following among recent wills:

'\_\_\_\_\_, Professor of music, carrying on business as a boot and shoe dealer . . . £14,500.'

There can be no doubt as to which was the hobby and which the business.

Musical criticism is tending to leave the psychical for the physical, if we may judge from two recent concert notices in London dailies:

'Madame Rosetta Pampolini is a very accomplished singer, whose tone is uniformly good alike in her passionate high notes and in her deep tubercular register.'

'Mr. \_\_\_\_ is a fine artist, who is literally pulsating with nerves.'

So are we, but less ostentatiously than Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, we hope.

## The Musician's Bookshelf

'Cobett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music.' Vol. 1, A—H. Compiled and edited by Walter Willson Cobett, with a Preface by W. H. Hadow.

[Oxford University Press: £5 5s. for the two volumes.]

Had Mr. Cobett done no more than conceive the idea of this book, and in a general way direct its production, he would have achieved something possible to few men of his years. But he has done much more. Not only has he contributed lengthy articles; he has also added postscripts to many others—not always necessary additions, perhaps, but invariably contributing something germane and interesting from the fullness of his life-long experience; and as editor he was very far from being a mere figurehead. (Even the drudgery of writing letters to contributors was

not beyond him, as this reviewer knows from personal experience.) In this connection, read this personal note. In his article on 'The Chamber Music Life' Mr. Cobbett says :

' There are lessons to be learned from the most modestly endowed man, and in these days, when modern hygiene has done so much to add to the normal span of human existence, one such lesson resides in the mere fact that at the age of eighty I am still continuing the regular practice of ensemble music with far more zest than in very early days. Many when they are nearing the sixties lay down the bow and take to the armchair and silk-cushion life, missing by so doing the crowning reward given to those who have worked at an art in youth—the power of enjoying its delights in later years.'

To this passage a footnote is added :

' Since writing the above I have been compelled in the interests of this book to lay down the bow temporarily.'

We may be sure that this abstention was not the least of the many sacrifices demanded by the book.

The list of contributors to the Cyclopaedia is Grove-like in its range, with about a hundred and fifty writers and translators.

No single review can indicate the scope of such a work as this, or comment on more than a few of its articles. Here, then, are a few impressions that remain after much dipping and sampling. Outstanding among the articles are those of Prof. Tovey. Is there a finer brain than his anywhere working on behalf of music at the present time? Or one served by so distinguished a literary style? Tovey's chief articles are on Brahms, Haydn, and Chamber Music. Mr. Edwin Evans is in his element with discussions of contemporary composers, especially those of this country. His articles have a great advantage over most others in an unusually liberal supply of music-type examples. It is good to see Dvorák receiving something like the comprehensive and appreciative treatment he deserves as a chamber-music composer. This excellent article is from his compatriot, Dr. Ottokar Šourek. Vincent d'Indy's article on Beethoven is rather disappointing. He spends too much time and fuss over the 'three-periods' idea, and much of Beethoven's chamber music receives no discussion at all. Mr. Cobbett's postscript here is actually necessary, as it fills most of the gaps left by the French writer. The discussion of chamber music as a form of art is shared between Professors Dent and Tovey, the former being mainly historical, the latter aesthetic. In this article Prof. Tovey has some valuable and interesting things to say concerning the treatment of *continuo*. The passage is too long to quote, but it should be studied carefully by all who have to deal with figured bass accompaniment of old works. This same article, by the way, contains a remark about Franck's Quartet that will irritate rather than convince most readers. Discussing the question of style, Tovey says that the Franck Quartet 'is full of excellent organ music, and it imitates the organ very skilfully. But except for the Scherzo, which is full of anybody's brilliance, there is strangely little evidence that it is a quartet at all.' This may or may not be true; the really undeniable thing is that a show of hands as to the most beautiful and enjoyable quartet

would give one of the top places to this piece of 'organ music' which is 'hardly a quartet at all.'

The editor's article on 'Humour in Chamber Music' is not quite adequate. There must surely be a good many examples of modern humorous chamber music. In fact, the medium is one that lends itself particularly to humour, even to wit. In the list of examples we miss Arthur Bliss's 'Conversations'—'The Committee' in this set of movements is one of the most genuinely humorous pieces of music in existence.

There will be a further opportunity of referring to the Cyclopaedia when the second volume makes its appearance in the autumn. Meanwhile, readers will join in a general salute to Mr. Cobbett on having carried out, in a manner both sound and brilliant, an enterprise that in its special field will be as permanently valuable as 'Grove.'

'Eurydice, or the Nature of Opera.' By Dyneley Hussey.

[Kegan, Paul, 2s. 6d.]

This little book discusses very readably and sensibly a good many matters connected with the past, present, and future of opera.

Mr. Hussey begins by admitting that the case against opera is a strong one. He puts and answers several objections—the complaint of the literary man that music can add nothing to poetry; of the musician that music is dragged down by being made illustrative and formless; that opera is unsatisfactory because it is a mixture of arts which do not blend and which have to make concessions to one another. He makes out a fair case for the defence. (He need not have bothered to answer the objection that opera is artificial because in real life people don't sing their conversation; we might object to all poetic drama on a similar ground.) But a prime reason why so many musicians are impatient of opera is left undiscussed, *i.e.*, the actual musical weakness of the greater part of the operatic repertory. A musician need not be derided as a highbrow or a purist if jealousy for his art makes him resent the lavish expenditure of money, effort, and applause on works wherein music that is merely conventional or weak is tolerated and even acclaimed because of its association with a successful drama, or owing to its performance by star singers. Literary men may (and sometimes do) object similarly on the ground of the shoddy character of libretti. There will, in fact, be a solid body of artistic folk indifferent or antagonistic to opera until the bulk of the repertory is made up of works that are first-rate on dramatic, literary, and musical grounds, instead of being weak in at least one of the three. This is no exorbitant demand, and it would have been satisfied long ago but for the fact that operatic audiences have usually been deficient in musical taste.

'Joseph Haydn: An Introduction.' By D. G. A. Fox.

[Oxford University Press, 1s. 6d.]

The latest number of the 'Musical Pilgrim' series is one of the best. Mr. Fox opens with a chronology of Haydn's life, and a brief discussion of the influences that made him what he was. The works dealt with in detail are Symphonies 7, 9, and 11 of the 'Salomon' set, 'The Creation,'

(Continued on p. 724.)

## TO ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, WANTAGE

There is a Spirit singing  
UNISON SONG FOR MASSED SINGING

Words by J. H. NEWMAN

Music by GEOFFREY SHAW

LONDON: NOVELLO AND COMPANY, LIMITED; NEW YORK: THE H. W. GRAY CO., SOLE AGENTS FOR THE U.S.A.

*Andante ed expressivo*

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sound, . . . No mor-tal min - strel breathes such tones a round The an - gels' hymn,

*poco allargando*  
the sov - 'reign har - mony . . . That guides the roll - ing orbs a long the

*poco allargando*  
*mf*

*mp a tempo*  
sky; . . . And hence, per-chance, the tales of saints who

viewed . . . And heard an - gel - ic choirs in sol - i - tude,

*più moto*

By most un - heard, . . . . . *be-cause the*  
*sempre marcato*

*più moto*

*f*

*poco rall.*

earth - ly din Of toil and mirth hath charms their ears to

*poco rall.*

*tempo primo*, *mp*

*(SOLO, OR SEMI-CHORUS*

win, . . . hath charms their ears to win. . . . There is a

*tempo primo*

*mp*

*poco rall.*

*mp*

*pp*

spirit sing - ing aye in air. . . . .

*poco rall.*

*mp*

*pp*

Tonic Sol-fa Edition in Novello's School Songs, No. 1547 (Edition B).

and four of the String Quartets. Mr. Fox's analyses are of the dissection kind, but his enthusiasm and his ability to see the spirit behind the letter save them from dryness. This 'Pilgrim,' like the recent little biography by Michel Brenet, the article on Haydn and Croatian music in Hadow's book of essays, and Tovey's article on Haydn's chamber music in Cobbett's Encyclopedia, serves to remind us that the time is over-ripe for a new, comprehensive, and critical biography of this great composer. There is a large public for Haydn now, and it shows every sign of growing rapidly. Is an adequate biography on the way?

'Sidelights on Touch.' By James Ching.

[Forsyth, 5s.]

In his latest work dealing with pianoforte technique Mr. Ching displays to the full not merely his mastery of a most intricate subject but also that gift of clear and concise statement which was such a welcome feature of his earlier treatises—'The Rotary Road,' 'Forearm Rotation,' and 'Muscular Relaxation.' The subject is treated under the main headings: 'Tone Variation and the Laws which Govern it,' 'The Problems of Agility (the Instrumental, Physical, and Mental Aspects),' 'The Arm as a Lever,' 'The Details of Touch (the Finger, Hand, Forearm, and Whole-Arm Touches),' with Appendices on 'The Lateral Adjustments' and 'Some Illustrations of the Various Touches.' The work concludes with a hundred and one questions, the answers to which are published separately. Teachers and students should certainly get this book. It will remove some misconceptions, throw light on much that was obscure, and assist materially in the attainment of a sound technique.

G. G.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

[Mention in this list neither implies nor precludes review in a future issue.]

- 'The Lyre and the Lyric.' An Introduction to the study of the relations between Music and Poetry. By Anthony Velleman Ireland. Pp. 22. Pietermaritzburg: *The Natal Witness, Ltd.*
- 'Music for All.' By Cyril Winn. Pp. 80. Routledge, 6d.
- 'Samuel Langford: Musical Criticisms.' Edited by Neville Cardus. Pp. 154. Oxford University Press, 8s. 6d.
- 'Le Phonographe.' By A. Cœuroy and G. Clarence. Pp. 194. Paris: Editions Kra, 12 francs.
- 'The Second Minuet.' By Maurice Besly. Foreword by Alec Waugh; Caricatures by Nerman. Pp. 37. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 5s.
- 'Memoirs of Lorenzo da Ponte, Mozart's Librettist.' Translated, with an Introduction and Notes by L. A. Sheppard. Pp. 388. Routledge, 15s.
- 'The Child's Own Book of the Great Composers: Beethoven, Handel, Schubert, and Bach.' By Thomas Tapper and Gertrude Azulay. Boosey, 6d. each.
- 'Natural Technics in Piano Mastery.' By Jacob Eisenberg. Pp. 246. William Reeves.

Purcell's 'Dido and Æneas' had one of its very rare French performances at Bayonne on June 18, by the local St. Cecilia Choir, conducted by Mr. Arthur Lynch. The translation was by M. Paul Landormy. The second half of the programme consisted of works by Chausson, Fauré, and Lili Boulanger.

## New Music

### ORGAN MUSIC

A year or so ago a reader asked concerning an organ piece by Charles Macpherson on the tune 'Narenza' ('Ye servants of the Lord'), which he had heard the composer play at St. Paul's Cathedral. Inquiries showed that it was then in manuscript. Dr. Marchant has since prepared it for publication, and it has just been issued by Novello's. The form is that of a choral prelude of the Pachelbel type, developed with unusual skill, each phrase of the tune being treated in close canon on the manuals before being delivered in long notes by the pedals. It is organ music of a purity and dignity that will make players regret the rarity of its gifted composer's excursions into this field.

One of the last—if not the last—editorial tasks of the late John E. West was the preparation of a new edition of Brahms's Choral Prelude and Fugue on 'O Traurigkeit, O Herzeleid.' This austere beautiful piece has hitherto been available only in a form that was inconvenient for the player, and that moreover made the music appear dry. Mr. West has suggested a reasonable amount of dynamic variety, treating the fugue on the plan of a gradual *crescendo*, from *mf* to *ff*. His practical hand has been specially useful in dealing with the widespread three-part manual writing of the fugue. Without carefully-planned division between the hands this is very awkward to play. What beautiful and enterprising polyphony this is! I have found myself playing it over and over again with a *crescendo* of pleasure. The piece is a worthy companion to the Eleven Choral Preludes; whether it will be regarded as dry or beautiful will depend on how far a player likes a composer to mix his music with brains (Novello).

Charles Tournemire is a composer who has made a good many admirers in this country by his typically French blend of skill and effectiveness. He has recently finished a work that may truly be called monumental. I give the full title in French, as some of the terms are misleading when translated: '51 Offices de l'année liturgique inspirés du chant grégorien et librement paraphrased.' The composer explains that the 'Offices' are grouped in three cycles: Christmas, Easter, and the season following Whitsuntide. Each of these is divided into (1) Prelude to the Introit, (2) Offertory, (3) Elevation, (4) Communion, (5) Postlude. The plainsong, which he truly says is 'an inexhaustible source of mysterious and splendid lines and a triumph of modal art,' is paraphrased very freely in being made the thematic bases:

'Endeavours have been made to maintain the infinite suppleness of its phrasing, its unmatched suavity, its mystical depth; similar endeavours were made towards the association of mediæval garlands with the many-sided sources of polyphony, laying aside any accents which could alter the serenity of cathedral music.'

A foreword by Joseph Bonnet says that the work is one for which organists have long been waiting:

'A great musician was needed for its accomplishment, a master of organ technique and composition, having the Spirit of Faith, loving the supernatural beauty of the liturgy and of the Gregorian melodies, a disciple of John Sebastian Bach and his Latin forerunners who

created for Gregorian themes different forms that the great Cantor resumed in the choral preludes. This great musician had to work in Peace and Meditation as an artist must do.'

Of the fifty-one numbers four have so far appeared. As they average about two dozen pages apiece, the reader may gauge the size of 'L'Orgue Mystique' as a whole. The music is of extraordinary freedom and variety. The pieces range in length from short page-long interludes to highly-developed movements, such as the brilliant 'Paraphrase and Double Choral' (seventeen pages). The harmony is a surprisingly successful blend of the modal and the daringly chromatic. Double pedal is used freely, and there is a good deal of melodic use of pedal. A few short pieces are for manuals only. Much depends on registration, especially in the numerous instances where the upper parts of the manual are used almost exclusively. In style the music is by turns reflective and rhapsodic, but throughout one feels that the term 'mystique' is justified. The work is on the difficult side, calling for a hand of big grasp as well as nimble fingers; and on the interpretative side the player must be *au fait* with the two extremes of plainsong and modern dissonance. On English organs some adaptation of the registration schemes may be necessary. For obvious reasons 'L'Orgue Mystique' will appeal specially to players at Roman Catholic churches and at English churches where plainsong is in regular use. But as the composer points out, certain of the longer and more systematically developed pieces may be used at recitals and even for concert purposes. The considerable technical demands of the work are, I fear, against its wide adoption at a time when few organists can afford time for the study of new music, and when so many posts are filled by amateurs and semi-professionals who work at other avocations. I feel too that the bolder dissonances may startle rather than edify the average congregation. In this connection, however, I imagine that M. Tournemire had in view a big building—at all events so far as the more extended numbers are concerned. There must be ample space for most of this music, in order that the more brilliant pieces may not be too edgy in detail and may gain in warmth, and that the quieter ones may sound remote. A liking for music so original as this is inevitably a matter of taste, but there can be no question as to the skill, resourcefulness, and devotion with which M. Tournemire has fulfilled his formidable task. The courageous publisher of 'L'Orgue Mystique' is Heugel, Paris. Copies may be had from Novello.

Some years ago an organ piece called 'The Sea' made a marked impression on most of us who were interested in the future of English organ music. The composer was H. Arnold Smith, at that time, I believe, a student at the Royal College of Music. We have had to wait a long while for a successor to 'The Sea.' It comes in the shape of an 'Ode Héroïque' (Cramer). The piece recalls Franck's 'Pièce Héroïque,' both in its chromaticism and in the style (and some of the treatments) of its themes. But for those of us who find the chromaticism of the 'Pièce Héroïque' sufficient, that of the 'Ode Héroïque' will be more than enough. Mr. Smith can write, decidedly, and there is much that is impressive in this work, but I do not feel that it

bears out the high promise of 'The Sea.' I add that it is difficult.

'Celebration, 1927,' by William Wolstenholme, was composed for the thousandth recital of his friend Roger Ascham at Port Elizabeth. Mr. Wolstenholme has recently shown a fondness for 5-4 time; here it is used without break throughout a long piece. The result strikes me as being somewhat monotonous. There is much that is characteristic of Wolstenholme in the springing chief theme, and in most of its treatment—e.g., the fugetta portion—and in the flowing middle section for diapasons; but the piece suffers as a whole from a lack of rhythmic variety. This is due not only to the persistent use of 5-4 (which inevitably falls into alternations of 3 and 2), but also to the fact that the thematic material is cast overmuch in brief sections of similar length. (The last page opens with eight of such sections.) The harmony is, as usual with Mr. Wolstenholme, a strong point. He can still keep our interest alive by charming and fresh treatment of diatonic progressions. The piece is published by Stainer & Bell, who send also a Fantasy Toccata by Leslie Woodgate. This lacks originality in its main subject, and the arpeggio treatment of the theme is uninteresting. The middle section contains some pleasant canonic writing. Also published by Stainer & Bell is a Preludio Cantico by Charles W. Pearce—a broad and festive voluntary on 'Gerontius' and 'Richmond,' two tunes generally associated with the hymn 'Praise to the Holiest.'

H. G.

#### CHAMBER MUSIC

If anybody wished to see a typical example of 'ultra modern' music he should study the Sonata for violin, pianoforte, and military drum, by N. Lopatnikoff (Edition Russe de Musique). The choice of the medium is significant, and the drum part is by no means negligible. Even in the slow movement, where one meets with a conventional phrase or two, such as :



and



the drum is not silent. In the first movement, *Allegro energico* and in the last, *Allegro vivace*, its rattle frequently blurs the harmonic scheme, reducing everything to a series of blows on the stretched skin of the ass. For one may press the bow on the strings or bang mercilessly the pianoforte without ever reaching anything like an adequate balance of sound against the drum. I rather suspect that the drum has been introduced for a different purpose. The excessive freedom of melodic design and harmonic construction had its origin in the desire to startle the listener. But a moment is bound to come when the listener ceases to be interested and refuses to be startled. A condition of disorder may evoke a desire to restore order; a condition of chaos induces a state of coma as soon as it is realised that any attempt to struggle against it is foredoomed to failure. It is just possible that Lopatnikoff has resorted to the drum purely in order to prevent us from slipping into the not unpleasant comatose state induced by tedious music. Macbeth shall sleep no more.

In spite of the parade of dissonances and of uncouth melodic intervals, the rhythmic design is conventional and even commonplace. It is curious how composers who make a boast of their self-sufficiency and independence can borrow, on occasion, current coin.

After Lopatnikoff the little whimsicalities of Erwin Schulhoff's Sonata for flute and pianoforte (Chester) seem but the airs and graces of an essentially good child. Here at any rate we find a certain tenderness and graciousness. The composer does not say anything profound, but his discourse is pleasing, and often reveals a poetic imagination. It may not be the highest, but it is music, and makes its appeal to us as music should, by the order and not by the disorder in which sounds are combined and arranged. F. B.

#### STRING ORCHESTRA

Vivaldi's Concerto in G minor for solo quartet and string orchestra *Ripieno* (with an additional pianoforte part *ad lib.*) is published by the Oxford University Press in an edition prepared by A. Mistowski. Expression marks abound, and the easiest and most obvious passage has been 'fingered,' even in the solo parts. Still this, if a fault, is a fault on the right side, for fingering can always be disregarded by the more expert player (no two players finger all passages alike) and by the amateur who has the advantage of expert advice.

F. B.

#### VIOLIN MUSIC

A canon is apt to suggest a scholastic exercise more than a piece to add interest and variety to the study of the violin. But the 'Four Canons' for violin and pianoforte of C. S. Lang (Stainer & Bell) have also a musical quality, apart from their scholastic worth. They are thus eminently suited for young students (none of them rises above the third position), who can accustom eye and ear to a scholastic form and realise at the same time its theoretical laws and the practical effect. 'Four Impressions,' by Richard H. Walther (Stainer & Bell), are tasteful little pieces, carefully edited in the violin part by Ernest Yonge. The second ('Cheerful') and the fourth ('Festive') are particularly happy examples of that ease and simplicity of expression that are so often sought and so seldom attained.

F. B.

#### UNISON

'Six Action Songs' for boys constitute the hundredth book of Novello's 'School Songs.' There is good variety—the cries of London, the 'instrumental band,' a sea song, and other lively pieces, one or two of them suitable for quite small children, and the others for youngish-middle-agers. I wish that songs about the 'merry' life of the soldier could now be laid by. There are so many other things to sing about, and though children are ready enough 'to attack the foe,' those who lately looked into that matter in the most practical way, in France, are surely agreed that the old crude melodrama of toy soldiering might well give way, whilst kiddies are very young, to other kinds of romance; then, when they are old enough to understand how many foes worth attacking there are in the world, other than the inhabitants thereof, let their fighting energies be directed into worthy channels. It is only thoughtlessness, I am

persuaded, that allows some of us still to allow them to be brought up to reckon soldiering a normal and desirable occupation. The new and clearer views of post-war days deserve our practical support, and I hopefully submit that teachers can do a great work by seeing that their charges quietly give soldiering songs a miss.

#### PART-SONGS FOR CHILDREN'S AND FEMALE VOICES

G. H. Jones's 'The Sands of Dee' is suitable for choirs of older girls, not (on account of its subject) so well for young children. The music, for s.s., is carefully and pleasantly devised to give scope for much thought in the dynamics and colouring of the story, without demanding much in the way of key-navigation. Dr. Keighley's tasteful 'Evening Rhapsody' (Shelley's 'How beautiful this night !') is for s.m.-s.a., accompanied. The lowest note is A flat. This is music to please choirs of modest experience who wish to develop their expressive powers without having to fight with tangles of difficult notes (Banks).

Alfred Moffat has arranged an old French 'ronde de table' as a two-part song for s.m.-s. (or s.s.), under the title 'A Sunny Holiday.' This is in cheery 6-8 dance-style, without dotted quavers, and with lively short leaps in both parts. The same arranger has set out for s.s.a. Praetorius's 'O Lovely Night'—slow, cool, quiet music, in simple, rather hymn-like style (Novello).

#### MALE-VOICE

Dr. Whittaker, who most often figures here as an arranger, issues two of his own compositions, to words by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson—'Candle Gate' and 'The Concertina' (both t.t.b.b.). The first is marked 'maestoso (with intensity)', and has a bite in its harmony. Robust singers who like something into which they can, so to speak, get the teeth of their imagination, should enjoy this. 'The Concertina' is a rough ditty of sailordom, beginning with the onomatopoeic 'twanging of a zither and the thin tinkle of a mandolin' (lower parts 'plunk, plunk, plunk'), and rising to the ferocity of despair because of the devil's tangles. The most experienced choirs will have great times with this, enjoying not only the clever suggestions of the instrument, but the mordant way in which the music seconds the poetry. (Williams).

G. H. Jones's 'Hymn to Zeus' (Robert Bridges) makes a bold—perhaps too bold—attempt to match the strength and depth of the poetry. The weakness of most of these settings is in their point-to-point nature. The sweep of the verse needs something more amply sustained and firmly impelled. This music will give t.t.b.b. choirs a feeling of tackling a fairly big thing, though it has no special difficulties. Its technical resources are somewhat slight, but it secures in places a good flush of colour in the harmony (Banks).

#### MIXED VOICES

Alfred M. Hale's 'Air' for double chorus (two s.a.t.b.'s) has no words, using only 'Ah' and 'La'; neither has it a single accidental, harmonizing a simple tune in blocks of mostly common chords, in a manner reminiscent of Vaughan Williams. The effect is thick and somewhat clumsy, and does not seem to be worth while (Goodwin & Tabb).

W. R. A.

## Teachers' Department

### DOES PRACTICE MAKE PERFECT? SOME HINTS FOR PIANOFORTE STUDENTS

BY BARBARA HOWARTH

On the surface there appears no apparent reason why practice should not make perfect. And yet a common feature in the educational sphere of music is the large number of students who, notwithstanding long periods spent at their instruments, fail to make any permanent advance in musically progress. The explanation is not usually far to seek if looked for. With few exceptions these students fail, not because they lack talent, and not because their theoretical knowledge is deficient, but simply and entirely because they have never learned the secret of successful practice.

As such failures are due to ignorance rather than incompetence, a few suggestions and explanations regarding the nature of practice may help these students to see wherein lies their mistake; for to understand the weaknesses of one's own work is the first step towards overcoming them. In practising, three clearly defined factors must be observed if the work is to be of value: 'the use of the ear,' 'slow practice,' and 'attention to detail'—and first in order of importance comes 'the use of the ear.' To use the ear rightly is to listen rightly; and to listen rightly implies the habit of concentration, the power to discriminate, and the faculty of sound criticism—essentials which form the foundation of good work and mark the outstanding difference between the playing of the artist and the playing of the mediocre performer.

Needless to say, to use the ear rightly in order to acquire these essentials demands special training and hard, sustained effort. We must learn to distinguish between the 'wrong' and 'right' effects of a single sound, to hear accurately the notes which form a chord, to comprehend musical structure, and to recognise the inflections of tone which create the ebb and flow of sound. And we can learn by listening keenly and intelligently to our own playing.

Now commonsense tells us that if we are to accomplish this task with any degree of correctness, we must take care to allow ourselves time in which to grasp the full import of the sound—an important reservation which points to the need of the second factor in our list, 'slow practice.' If students would only realise the immense advantage the slow practice method has over the hurried, scrambled performance so dear to their hearts, there would be considerably less waste of time and fewer failures. For not only does slow practice widen the possibilities of aural development, but by replacing the incorrect muscular activity due to haste by the complete slow action which brings strength and elasticity to the muscles, it bridges the gap between stiffness and executive ease.

And now we come to the third factor, 'attention to detail.' So far we have been concerned with matters relating to the act of playing; 'attention to detail,' on the other hand, is here intended to refer to procedure in practising. It can be viewed from two distinct angles: as a

necessary adjunct to right interpretation and as an auxiliary to muscular training. Musical compositions are built up of sections arranged according to certain rules in a way which enables the composer to express his ideas in sound. To find out what these ideas are necessitates analysis. Form, rhythm, melodic and harmonic construction must be examined as units forming an integral part of a whole—a process which well repays for the trouble it entails in making clear how best to represent the composer's meaning artistically.

As an aid to muscular training the use of 'attention to detail' is easily explained. It means separating technical difficulties from their context for purposes of study. The bars over which we repeatedly stumble in our pieces, the sticky passages in our technical exercises—these need singling out so that by close examination we can get at the root of the trouble and in so doing overcome the difficulty.

The art of practice, then, is not measured by time but by the aim: to hear with the eye, to see with the ear; to know what is wrong and how to make the wrong right; to get full value out of every minute; and to become not an automatic machine but a musician.

### POINTS FROM LECTURES

Speaking about programme music at the Liverpool Soroptimist Club, Dr. A. W. Pollitt pointed out how, in Berlioz's and Liszt's days, people needed to have something on which they could lay hold. They couldn't reach the music, so they laid hold of the programme. The popularity of programme music testified to the appeal, not necessarily of music, but of programme. The large increase in the number of users of wireless and gramophone, Dr. Pollitt continued, was eminently satisfactory. To hear a piece of music once was, of course, better than not to hear it at all. But to hear it once was not to know it. We heard too much and did not know enough.

The later works of John Ireland were illustrated during a lecture by Mr. Hubert Foss at Trinity College of Music. He found the finest expression of Ireland's art in the setting of five poems of Thomas Hardy, in which music and words were perfectly welded together. The Sonatina, which some believed to be the most, and others the least, important work of the composer's, yet summed up all the changes that took place in his mind during the three years in which he abstained from writing.

Cerebral indigestion was considered by some members of the Liverpool branch of the British Music Society to be the effect of their programmes of contemporary music, and it was decided to discontinue the specifically contemporary evenings of music.

Plainchant was the subject of a lecture which Mr. Royle Shore gave to members of the London Society of Organists. His opinion was that with churchmen meeting so often on central occasions, the Church should organize community singing of Church music, ancient and modern, on some method. At present people were helpless apart from hymns. In his view there was not a Cathedral Chapter in England, lesser or greater, that could even say an Office decently, much less sing one as they ought to be able to do. J. G.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Questions must be of general musical interest. They must be stated simply and briefly, and if several are sent, each must be written on a separate slip. Our 'Answers to Correspondents' column closes on the 14th of the month. We cannot undertake to reply by post.

F. A. C. E.—You ask for advice concerning the formation of a male-voice choir. The number of voices should not be less than twenty (we have heard good results from fewer, but the voices were above the average); from fifty to sixty is a good maximum (but if you can get a lot more don't say 'no' to them, always provided that you don't ship mere passengers). In testing voices look out for quality rather than power, especially in the higher voices; refuse any aspirants who haven't a good ear, and insist on a fair standard of sight-reading. Questions of balance must be left until the choir has got under way; you can then see where adjustment is necessary—e.g., by transferring a second bass to the firsts; a first bass to second tenor (if he'll go there); and so on. Don't overlook the importance of a good foundation. Many male-voice choirs are top-heavy, so look out for basses who can sing a good fatly-sonorous low F, and pin them down to second bass. Write to Novello's for a selection (on approval) of easy music for a start; specify whether top line is alto or tenor (aim at getting tenors for the top, and watch their production, seeing that they don't get shouty and 'open'). Let them sing falsetto on high notes at a pinch; 'tis better than forced tone, though less good, of course, than real tenor quality.

M. D. N.—(1.) Without knowing the child it is impossible to give an opinion as to whether she is too young to begin lessons. The age would be right for some children and wrong for others. (2.) As to the scale-playing section of the Associated Board examinations: be prepared to play in time-groups, accenting in such a way that the scale ends on a main accent. The speed depends on the examiner, to some extent. For scales in *staccato* sixths it would be moderate. Anyway, examiners usually attach more importance to evenness, rhythm, fluency, and tone, than to pace. (3.) The melodic fragment you quote seems familiar to us, but we cannot identify it. As you heard it on a gramophone record of Galli Curci, an inquiry of the H.M.V. would no doubt bring you the information.

B. C.—We have had no experience of the teaching of sight-reading by correspondence. However good it may be, it is no substitute for your own slogging efforts. Your letter shows where your difficulty lies. You say, 'I have a good ear and can read chords easily, but runs of any description throw me out.' The remedy is to improve your technique on the scale and arpeggio side, so that passages based on them can be grasped as easily as you now grasp chords. Forgive us for saying that we are staggered to hear that you hold the L.R.A.M. (Teacher's) Diploma, and yet cannot read fluently a Lower Division piece! How did you get that diploma?

J. P. H.—Both the 'Mastersingers' and the 'Ring' are fully analysed in the 'Musical Pilgrim' series, the former by Cyril Winn, the latter by A. E. F. Dickinson (Oxford University Press, 1s. 6d. each).

B. L. J.—(1.) Any of the shorter works of Bach would do for a 'middle voluntary,' e.g., Fantasy and/or Fugue in C minor, the 'short' G minor, the 'short' C major, the Alla Breve, and many of the Chorale Preludes. (2.) Max Reger: Fifty-two Choral Preludes; Karg-Elert, Sixty-six Choral Improvisations. Of these the latter will be the better for your purpose. There is also a set of Twenty Choral Preludes and Postludes by Karg-Elert—a particularly useful and attractive set. All the above may be had from Novello's.

H. W. W.—Your question is rather vague. When you speak of 'orchestral pianoforte playing as a means of earning a living,' we presume you mean work in restaurant, cinema, and dance bands. As you have had some experience in playing in a small band, we suggest that you look out for openings of the kind you need. But we advise you to think hard before taking it up as a means of livelihood. You might do well if you combined this kind of work with some pianoforte teaching, for which you have aptitude.

OLD ENGLISH.—Thomas Ford was one of the most prominent of the Lutenist composers. The date of his birth is doubtful, but is generally reckoned to be about 1580. The first fact known about him is that he published a collection of music in 1607. This has been reprinted in the English School of Lutenist Song Writers, edited by Dr. Fellowes (Stainer & Bell). Ford died at Westminster in 1648.

A. T. C. L.—What is difficult to one player may be pretty easy to another, so we can't grade the ten Beethoven Sonatas with confidence, as we know nothing of your technical ability. Roughly, however, we should put them in this order: 3, 2, 13, 17, 22, 18, 24, 23, 26, 21. Instead of adopting your references to opus number and key, we have used the number of the Sonatas as they appear in thematic lists.

E. L.—(1.) The Schubert Pianoforte Duets about which you inquire may be had from Novello's three vols. (6s. each) and a supplementary vol. (4s.). (2.) Try 'The brass band, and how to write for it,' by Vincent (Winthrop Rogers). (3.) The Eulenberg series of miniature scores. They may be had from Novello's. Certain French publishers issue miniature scores of contemporary works in their catalogues.

CHORALIST.—We think your best plan would be to give English pronunciation to the Japanese words in 'A Tale of Old Japan.' The correct Japanese method would be difficult to ascertain, still more difficult for the singers to acquire, and would not help the audience. We have not heard the work performed, and so we are in the dark as to custom.

VERITAS.—You ask us to 'place' the 'world-famous organist, Max Erard, and his fourteen-ton Cathedral organ.' His introduction of a diminished seventh into the penultimate chord of the 'Hallelujah' chorus 'places' him conclusively, we think. Don't take him too seriously. A man must live!

INTERESTED.—(1.) The diploma is of little value. (2.) We believe the pamphlet 'Musical Examinations' has long been out of print. *Musical News* is now incorporated with *The British Musician* Editorial Office, Barclay Road, Warley Woods, Birmingham. (3.) Mus. D., of course.

J. L. W.—On questions on form read Pauer's 'Applied Form' (Novello).

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K. J. B.—We know of no musical schools where student-teachers are admitted on a basis similar to that of pupil-teachers in day-schools.

E. M. I.—It is not (at present) our intention to include the pieces for the Final Grade in our yearly notes on the Associated Board Pianoforte syllabus.

GUIDA.—Your treatment of the close of the Rachmaninov 'Melodie' is quite right.

Mr. Andrew Cassels is good enough to write suggesting that 'C. P. E.', who asked last month for unison anthems, might well try Vaughan Williams's 'Let us now praise famous men' (Curwen), Greene's 'O give me the comfort' and 'Praised be the Lord' (Oxford University Press), and C. S. Lang's 'Remember, O thou man' (Novello).

A number of readers kindly send information as to 'E lami' (see inquiry from 'Lay Vicar' in July number). As Mr. Frank Styler goes very fully into the question we print his letter in our correspondence columns for the benefit of readers in general.

Will 'C. A. B.' (who inquired last month concerning clarinet solos) please send his address?

## Church and Organ Music

### ROYAL COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS

#### CHOIR-TRAINING EXAMINATION

(*Diploma Exam. CHM.*)

PASSED, MAY, 1929

Ball, C. J., Lancaster.

PASSED FELLOWSHIP, JULY, 1929

Alden, J. H., Harrow-on-the-Hill.  
Bailey, F. E., Southport.  
Butcher, A. V., London (*Lafontaine Prize*).  
Christopher, C. S., Birmingham (*Turpin Prize*).  
Crute, F. G., London.

PASSED ASSOCIATESHIP, JULY, 1929

Anderson, R. B., Sunderland.  
Barklie, Miss A. D., Bognor.  
Barnes, H. L., Bedford.  
Blacker, J., Sheffield.  
Brewer, R. J., London.  
Brooke, J. W., Exeter.  
Campbell, A., Ryton-on-Tyne.  
Cheaton, E. A., London.  
Coleman, H. C., London.  
Coxwell, J. G., Bromley.  
Crompton, Miss K., Chesterfield.  
Dearden, A., Halifax.  
Edwards, G., London.  
Evans, H. P., Llanelli.  
Faddi, Miss L., South Ascot.

Field, H., Cardiff.  
Gammon, Miss A., Barnstaple.  
Green, R. H. C., Birmingham.  
Griffiths, I., Neath.  
Hartley, C., Halifax.  
Heaton, F., Accrington.  
Higgs, W. P., Gloucester (*Lafontaine Prize*).  
Hughes, A., Wrexham.

ALAN W. SHINDLER, *Registrar.*

#### FELLOWSHIP ORGAN-WORK

The outstanding feature of this examination was the marked improvement in the general treatment of the organ.

The examiners felt that many candidates were sufficiently musical to pass, but, owing largely to lack of control under the trying conditions of the examination room, their actual performance did not do justice to them. It may help such candidates to know that they are being listened to with the greatest sympathy, and that it is the examiners' desire to pass and not to fail them.

*Bach's Prelude and Fugue in A minor.*—Continuity of rhythm was often lacking, and excessive speed, particularly at the end of the Fugue, landed several in difficulties.

*Allegretto from Elgar's Organ Sonata.*—The general character of this piece was misunderstood. The weakest feature was the time variation. The changes in tempo rarely dovetailed, and often the pace was governed by the technical difficulties. The demisemiquaver passages lacked clarity, and many played C natural instead of C sharp in the bass of the last bar on p. 15.

*Handel's Overture to 'Athalia.'*—The strength and dignity of the music was not often realised, and the slow interlude proved a stumbling-block to those candidates whose sense of rhythm was weak.

The chief defect of the playing from vocal score was the failure to observe quickly the crossing of parts. Candidates are recommended to practise this test in two parts, especially the inner parts, before attempting to combine the four parts.

The Unfigured Bass was on the whole well done, though several ignored the time of the given theme, and over-harmonized it.

The Sight-Reading was again the weakest part of the examination, a very small percentage of candidates passing. Regular daily practice and a wider knowledge of all kinds of music is the only cure for slow perception of harmonic progressions and modulations.

The Extemporisation again showed improvement as regards the treatment of the organ. The style of the given subjects was also better observed. Candidates still need to attend to the rhythm of the given subject.

The Melody did not suffer from over-harmonization as it did at the previous examination. Simplicity should be the chief aim.

HENRY G. LEY (Chairman).  
STANLEY MARCHANT.  
EDWARD C. BAIRSTOW.

#### FELLOWSHIP PAPER-WORK

*Free Counterpoint.*—This was generally satisfactory. Those who failed should look up Bach's Chorale Prelude No. 48, 'O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig' (Versus 3), in which the texture is similar to that required in the question. The attempts at the alternative 16th-century counterpoint were better than usual.

*Fugue.*—In a large number of cases unmusical 'answers' were written, revealing a misapplication of principles, and unintelligent reading. In a three-part exposition only three entries are necessary. The texture was generally poor. It should be observed that, though a fugue subject must begin and end in either the tonic or dominant key, intermediate modulations may be employed. Hardly anyone perceived the obvious modulation to F minor in the course of the subject.

*History, &c.*—The answers were generally good.

*Orchestration.*—This was badly done. It should be pointed out that it is the usual custom to write for horns in F. Some wrote for horns in D and E flat. Some of the scoring was quite ridiculous. The trombones were asked to skip large intervals from a very short note, and to glide down in demisemiquavers in the jazz manner. The scoring showed little imagination, commonsense, and little grasp of even elementary principles.

*String Quartet.*—Some candidates tried to work it in F major, and naturally came to grief. The obvious use of the Neapolitan sixth in bar 7 should have proved the key to be D minor. But the last bar was the cause of much havoc. It should be remembered that the final chord of a Cadence need not always come in the first beat of the bar. And it should not require much thought to find out that the two final A's could be harmonized with two chords, dominant and tonic, in D minor.

Again, the semiquaver figure in bar 5 was an indication of an accompanying figure throughout. To use it only as given in bar 5 is just as bad as introducing a tree into a seascape!

*Vocal Quartet.*—The work was on the whole only moderate. Some over-reached themselves, others wrote a bad hymn-tune. The word 'interim' caused much trouble as regards accentuation. One candidate wrote 'in ter 'im.' We forgot whether we accepted the invitation!

C. H. KITSON (*Chairman*).  
G. J. BENNETT.  
T. KEIGHLEY.

#### ASSOCIATE ORGAN-WORK

The examiners are glad to report a distinct improvement in the playing of the tests. In several instances, however, while two of the three tests would be done well, the third would be played quite badly. This seems to show that candidates should discriminate in apportioning the time devoted to test-practice, and concentrate more on their weak subject. With regard to the pieces, a wide divergence of opinion (and some eccentricity) was shown as to the tempo of the Bach Fugue in G minor.

Unsteadiness of time and slovenly phrasing proved the undoing of many candidates; several, too, used an extreme *staccato* foreign to the genius of the organ.

The registration was often at fault. In this matter examiners made all due allowance for the difficulties of an unfamiliar instrument, but many candidates chose stops which would have been crude or unsuitable on *any* organ (in one case the Macpherson Prelude was played on the Swell Horn). While the playing of the pieces was rarely *bad*, the general standard was on a rather dull and undistinguished level.

G. D. CUNNINGHAM (*Chairman*).  
G. THALBEN BALL.  
E. D'EVRY.

#### ASSOCIATE PAPER-WORK

There was a creditable level of attainment in most of the work. Two faults were common, and both have been commented on before: the difficulty of realising an implied modulation, unless it is indicated by an accidental, and the treatment of the unessential notes of a given melody or bass as essential notes of a chord.

*Strict Counterpoint.*—There was a falling off in this subject, probably because the C.F. given was in a minor key. The raised sixth and seventh of the melodic minor scale were often treated unmusically, the raised sixth especially being frequently used in an aggressive and ugly manner. Better spacing is advisable, and also rhythmic in addition to melodic smoothness.

*Free Counterpoint.*—Fair on the whole. Not enough use was made of the given melodic figure, and there was too much unbroken movement. Harmony was sometimes clumsy.

*Pianoforte Accompaniment.*—Showed commendable improvement, the pianoforte idiom being much better felt and expressed. The harmonizing was not always suitable, and did not suggest that a preliminary sketch of the chords to be used had been made beforehand.

*Melody and Bass.*—Both were done very fairly; on the whole the added bass was better than the added treble; in both of these implied suspensions were often misunderstood. Some candidates seemed to think that the downward compass of the 'cello extended to A!

*Harmonization of Bass.*—Many candidates failed to take advantage of the contrast offered by the implied modulation, and there was too much crude, ungrammatical harmony. There is still a tendency to force in pointless imitations, and these were often responsible for the harmonic faults.

*Questions.*—Candidates generally seemed to have expected a question on Byrd, and, having prepared for it, worked in their knowledge of him in the answer to the question on the 'Triumphs of Oriana,' the connection being that Byrd did not contribute to the collection! But, in general, the writing was less diffuse, and more to the point.

In the Essay, the examiners noticed that several candidates dealt in a very brief manner with the chapter in which the essay was set, but extended their essay in an irrelevant manner with matter taken from other chapters.

E. T. SWEETING (*Chairman*).  
FREDK. G. SHINN.  
G. DYSON.

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The sixty-fifth Annual General Meeting was held at the College, Kensington Gore, on Saturday, July 20, 1929, under the chairmanship of the President, Prof. E. C. Bairstow.

Amongst those present were the following Members of the Council: Sir Ivor Atkins, Mr. H. L. Balfour, Mr. E. T. Cook, Mr. G. D. Cunningham, Dr. H. E. Darke, Dr. Alan Gray, Dr. Stanley Marchant, Dr. H. W. Richards, Mr. Reginald Steggall, Dr. F. G. Shinn (hon. treasurer), Dr. E. T. Sweeting, Mr. Thalben Ball, and Dr. H. A. Harding (hon. secretary).

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Hon. Secretary read the annual report as follows:

#### SIXTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

Your Council has the honour to report that the past year has maintained with unbroken success the work and prestige of the College.

In the department of finance it is a pleasure to record the steady recovery to its pre-war position; an advance so marked that your Council has felt justified in spending a considerable sum on the provision of an exterior fire-escape staircase—a safeguard which has been long felt to be desirable.

Your Council deeply regrets to have to report the death of several of its most respected members.

The late Dr. C. W. Pearce rendered ungrudging and unwearied devotion to the College for many years. He was Hon. Treasurer from 1908 to 1926, and until recently an Examiner and Member of the Council—offices which he filled with ability and distinction. His loss will be severely felt.

The services to the musical profession of the late Prof. J. C. Bridge were widely recognised and highly valued. He was a greatly esteemed vice-president of the College.

The late Dr. H. Davan-Wetton was one of our oldest Members of the Council and an Examiner on many occasions. He always strove for the best interests of this Institution, and by his cheerful personality endeared himself to all who knew him.

The late Dr. Eaglefield Hull was also an Examiner and a Member of the Council of long standing. He founded the British Music Society, and was well known as an author of many works bearing upon different branches of musical art.

The examiners appointed for 1929-30 were: Prof. E. C. Bairstow, Prof. P. C. Buck, Mr. G. D. Cunningham, Mr. E. d'Evry, Dr. G. Dyson, Dr. T. Keighley, Prof. C. H. Kitson, Dr. H. G. Ley, Dr. Stanley Marchant, Dr. C. Charlton Palmer, Dr. F. G. Shinn, Dr. E. T. Sweeting, and Mr. G. Thalben Ball.

A lecture was given at the College by Sir Hamilton Harty on February 16, 1929, the subject being 'Brahms's Variations for Orchestra on a Theme by

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held at July 20, Prof. members Balfour, H. E. H. W. Shinn Ball, eeting llows:

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Haydn, Op. 56a' (selected for analysis for the Fellowship Examination in July, 1929). The work was played upon two pianofortes by students of the Royal Academy of Music, by permission of Dr. John McEwen (Principal).

During the year a hundred and forty-three new members were elected, four hundred and fifty-eight candidates were examined, and ninety-six passed.

The arduous work of the hon. treasurer, Dr. F. C. Shinn, and of the hon. secretary, Dr. H. A. Harding, is always so warmly appreciated that it is needless to say more than that they have again merited your Council's gratitude by yeoman service.

The thanks of your Council are specially due to the hon. auditors, Mr. W. Glanvill Hopkins and Mr. R. H. Yarrow, and also to the professional auditors, Messrs. Pannell.

Your Council wishes to acknowledge the courteous, able, and efficient assistance of the Registrar, Mr. Alan Shindler, and his devotion to the duties of his responsible position.

Finally, cordial thanks are rendered to the staff for their loyal and useful help so readily given on all occasions.

The Annual Report was adopted (proposed by Mr. Wharton Wells, seconded by Mr. H. J. Taylor).

The Annual Financial State, presented by the Hon. Treasurer, was adopted (proposed by Mr. C. Marshall, seconded by Mr. Baker).

Sir Ivor Atkins, in proposing the election of the Hon. Treasurer, said it was well known what valuable work Dr. F. G. Shinn had done for the College and how eminently equipped he was for the office. He had the greatest pleasure in proposing that Dr. Shinn be re-elected as Hon. Treasurer.

Dr. Sweeting seconded, and the resolution was carried with acclamation.

The re-election of Dr. H. A. Harding as Hon. Secretary was proposed by Dr. H. W. Richards. He referred to Dr. Harding's twenty-one years of service, during which he had shown that the R.C.O. and all its developments were his first and foremost consideration. Dr. Harding has never flinched from expressing his opinions—sometimes with emphasis!—when he thought that the best interests of the College were not receiving the thought and attention which they deserved. No difficult or awkward situation seemed to ruffle him, and he was always equal to the occasion. The R.C.O. had indeed been fortunate in having Dr. Harding to support all the necessary reforms which had taken place during his term of office. It was to be hoped that he would allow himself to be re-elected as the honoured and deeply-respected Hon. Secretary.

Dr. G. D. Cunningham seconded the proposal. He said Dr. Harding's capabilities had been impressed upon him during the past week, when, as an examiner, he had been under Dr. Harding's most careful, vigilant, and very severe criticism. He considered the present Hon. Secretary the best friend the R.C.O. has ever possessed.

The President, in putting the resolution to the meeting, said he hoped Dr. Harding would continue his valuable work. Everybody had the greatest affection for him.

Dr. Harding's election was carried with enthusiasm.

The Hon. Auditors, Messrs. Glanvill Hopkins and Mr. Yarrow, were re-elected (proposed by Dr. Shinn and seconded by Mr. H. L. Balfour), with hearty thanks for their able services.

Dr. Harding proposed the re-election of the professional Auditors. This was seconded by Mr. Wharton Wells and carried unanimously.

The President: We now proceed to the election of four Members of the Council, to fill the vacancies caused by rotation retirements. Only four nominations have been received, viz.:

London—Prof. P. C. Buck and H. W. Richards.  
Country—Sir Ivor Atkins and H. F. Ellingford.

Therefore there will be no voting, and I declare the Fellows whose names I have just read to be duly elected Members of the Council.

The Annual General Meeting then terminated.

#### DIPLOMA DISTRIBUTION

On Saturday, July 20, immediately after the annual general meeting, the presentation of diplomas was made by the President (Prof. E. C. Bairstow). The Concert Hall of the College was crowded to excess.

Dr. Harding (hon. secretary) announced that at the recent Fellowship Examination there were eighty-three candidates; of these ten passed. For the Associateship there were a hundred and fifty-nine candidates, and forty-seven passed. For the Choir-Training Diploma there was one candidate, and he passed.

The prizes were awarded as follows:

The Fellowship Lafontaine Prize to A. V. Butcher; the Fellowship Turpin Prize to C. S. Christopher.

The Associateship Lafontaine Prize to W. P. Higgs; the Associateship Sawyer Prize to J. Kentish.

The President then gave the following address:

#### MUSIC IN RELATIONSHIP TO LIFE

What I am going to talk to you about to-day is so obvious that I almost feel ashamed to make it the subject of an address. The artists amongst you may be bored by it, but I have a strong reason for reminding you of these obvious truths. It is this. Perhaps because these things are so obvious, young musicians are often left to find them out for themselves, and their work suffers accordingly. I myself as a young man was ignorant of them. It may be that mine is a slow-moving mind, but the fact remains that for many years music was to me no more than a series of sounds which in some mysterious way stimulated me more or less. Why some music moved me whilst other music left me cold I neither knew nor cared. The mystery to some extent still remains, but it is no longer quite so unfathomable, for at last I am beginning to find that what I dislike in music I also dislike outside music. It was when I came to see how closely life and art are related that music became a far more living thing to me; it helped me to a fairer criticism of music and the performance of it, and it made it easier to get to the root of the difficulties of those whom I taught. It was through rhythm that these ideas dawned on me. I began to see that love and fear stir up very different kinds of motion, the first orderly but not stiff and mechanical, the second a disorderly hash of jerky, tiring movements alternating with a complete hold-up of motion of any kind.

A man once told me of a voyage he had made from one of the Colonies during the war. Every day the passengers and crew were drilled, and each one had a station and duties allotted to him in case the ship was torpedoed. When it actually was torpedoed my friend said that the timid ones either hung on so tight to the first thing they could get hold of that they had to be wrenched free, or else they ran about like wild things and got in every one's way. A few calm souls did their duty as at rehearsals. Whether it is the timid old woman about to cross the road and first hugging the pavement and then suddenly dashing in front of a motor, or a nervous candidate at an examination who now hurries and now breaks down, or badly written music which hangs about one emotional spot too long and then, for no apparent reason, rushes into some rhythmic figure which it will forsake again in a very short time—all are the victims of fear, and only love can cast it out. Many times recently I have been told by pianists that their teachers stopped them for every mistake and that they in practice did the same, until they discovered that it had become a habit and they could scarcely play through a piece without stopping. So the teacher increased in them their natural fear of the notes, and by doing so, diminished their love of playing; for fear casts out love, just as love casts out fear. Or take another obvious relationship between rhythm in life and rhythm in music.

A well-ordered life consists of a regular, but not rigid, alternation of stress and relaxation—regular periods of sleeping and waking; regular work and regular play. Too little sleep and life becomes tiring. Irregular meals and the human mechanism gets out of order. Too much play and play ceases to be fun; too much work and work is a burden.

So exactly the same in music. There must be an orderly but not rigid alternation of stress and relaxation. If every beat has an accent the music is laboured; if no beat has an accent the music is as vague and purposeless as life that is all play. If all the climaxes attain the same degree of excitement and succeed each other without sufficient episodical relief, the music is as hectic and wearisome as a day when one is rushed off one's feet by unexpected stress of work. If the music has no climax, it is like a day spent in examining when all the candidates are dull and none are bad enough to be funny or good enough to be interesting. Brahms's master in composition, Marxsen, said that all good music is unity clothed with variety.

There are certain constructional elements to be found in every kind of music, the recurrence of rhythmic patterns, as, for instance, the division of the music into bars or the combination of sounds to form chords, and of parts to form counterpoint. The rules which govern them may be learned from a text-book, and it is the brain which helps one to understand them. Then comes the imagination and clothes these things—dull in themselves—with variety. But surely these things are plain enough in music if one has observed that though a tree has a trunk and branches which remain all the year round, its leaves, blossom, and fruit are continually changing in a beautiful and wonderful way—regular and orderly, but never rigid. The sun rises and sets every day, but York Minster never looks twice the same by reason of the varying seasons and the ever-changing clouds and visibility of the atmosphere. We all have the same bodies and minds, and yet none of us are alike. To meet another man the absolute replica of one's self would be a horrible experience. Yet to find someone who does not conform to the law of unity, who is minus some essential part or of one of the senses, is just as horrible. Not only is this principle apparent in Nature, in mankind, and in music, but in the other arts. In architecture, for instance, all buildings have constructional elements more or less in common. When the motive for building is purely material, as in a factory or a row of artisans' cottages, there is nothing to see but the dry bones. It is only when the builders have been stimulated by spiritual vision that the dull and obvious is cloaked in beauty and variety. In the Chapter House at York the carving on each stall is not only different but so different that one marvels at the fecundity of the invention of these mediæval masons.

One could go on preaching from this text *ad libitum*. All I can do now is to give you a few illustrations of the application of this law which have helped me. We know that personality matters more than all else in music. People whose brainy or material side is stronger than their imaginative or spiritual side usually teach in such a way as to stifle personality, individuality, and originality. The amazing thing is they fail to perceive that, having done their worst, Nature still asserts itself and personality, to a limited extent, persists in their victims. I have heard choir-boys taught on some stupid system, such as the vowel 'oo', or the use of head-voice alone, by some man whose one idea was to unify them and make them as like as peas in a pod. Yet, when he had done his worst, each boy's voice was different. It is undoubtedly difficult to refrain from impressing too strongly one's own interpretation of music on a pupil. But experience helps us to find out whether a pupil has ideas or does things through ignorance, and whether the ideas, when they are present, conform to sound principles. There is, however, no difficulty in encouraging a pupil to use imagination and to make an attempt at expression

without the teacher's help. If this is unsuccessful the teacher can suggest and stimulate without forcing the pupil to imitate blindly. With regard to the voice, few people seem to realise that beauty of tone is the result of freedom and ease, not of some system that at best can give only one monotonous colour and thus tend to destroy variety.

In quite another direction this law of unity clothed with variety is just as useful, namely, in criticising one's own and other people's compositions. A man comes to you for your advice. He has written several exercises for his degree. None has been successful. You look through them and find them comparatively free from technical errors, but without ideas and therefore without the slightest imprint of his own personality. There is not even a tiny inspiration—some small thing that you can honestly say he has thought of himself. All the constructional elements are there, the things that make for unity and order, but the blossom and the fruit are missing—there is none of that variety which is the spice of life. His emotions have never been stirred by his work. Although he has a fairly fluent technique he cannot forget it. Stanford said that all technique must be learned to be eventually forgotten. It is essential that musicians of this type should perceive the relationship between life and art. Here we have a man well equipped by hard work, and yet he can think of nothing worth putting on paper. Where is he to get the stimulus and inspiration if not from the sights and sounds and experiences of life, and if he has never perceived the relationship between these and music, how can he do so?

Let me give you an example of how the rule works in the opposite direction. We are all of us anxious to keep abreast of the times. We are not so short-sighted as to condemn modern music because it does not appeal to us at a first hearing. At the same time commonsense tells us that only a small proportion of contemporary music can survive. How are we to judge its worth? Well, of course no one's judgment is infallible, but this much we do know, that if it is to live it must not be chaotic, disorderly, and licentious. It must not turn night into day or day into night. Its periods of repose must balance with its moments of climax. Looked at in large it must have a convincing shape. Imagination, which alone can give variety, which alone can give a man vision to do something fresh, is no good without the other side, the brainy side, which will teach him to present his visions in such a form as will carry conviction.

Let us consider for a moment another case where it seems that inability to realise the relationship between art and life causes all sorts of trouble. We hear innumerable examination candidates, competitors at festivals and others, whose time and rhythm is more or less steady when they have notes to play or sing on each beat of the bar. But if a note has to be held over more than one beat, or if there happen to be rests on certain beats, they become uncertain, nearly always shortening the long notes or rests. I feel sure that the reasons why they do this are two-fold. The first and most important is that their rhythm is passive, not active. Their sense of pulse comes to them from the music as they play it or sing it, and therefore when long notes or rests occur, where the music itself gives them no pulse, their heart stops beating. They fail to see that every living or moving thing lives or moves by a beat, pulsation, or vibration—such as the hearts of men and animals, the vibrations of heat, light, electricity, and sound, and the explosions in the cylinder of the motor car. They cannot have observed that a weak, intermittent, or uncertain pulse in living things or in machines results in feeble and precarious movement, and that irregular vibrations cannot produce a musical sound. What a difference it would make if only these people could be brought to understand that active rhythm is a sense which they can voluntarily create in themselves, and that it passes from their senses into their music and animates it—the very

opposite effect from that produced by passive rhythm. Yet this truth is shouting at them from every moving thing they encounter—God-made or man-made.

The second reason for their uncertainty on sounds or rests of longer duration than those in their immediate proximity is to be found in their failure to assimilate another natural law, namely, that which is heavy is slow, that which is slow is heavy; that which is light is quick, that which is quick is light. I surely need not go to any length to prove this. Jumping is slower and heavier than walking; walking is slower and heavier than running. The motor lorry and the goods train are slower and heavier than the Rolls-Royce or the express. Yet there are more musicians who have a stronger sense of pulse than there are those who really appreciate the subtleties of the agogic accent and of *rubato*, both of which depend very largely on this law. Sense of pulse alone can become very humdrum without a sense of the agogic accent and *rubato*. It might almost be said that when the latter comes out strongly in the music of any period then the art flourishes, and that when the pulse alone is evident, then music is decadent. Take our own musical history, for instance. In the Tudor period the bar, which is only a large beat, was merely a background. And if you believe, as I do, that music has never flourished in England since Tudor times as it flourishes to-day, then you can also say that never has there been such freedom in regard to the rigid bar as there is now. The same may be said with regard to the history of stained glass—a comparison that may appeal to Church organists. If you take the leading as the structural background corresponding to the bars of music, and the coloured glass as the main object of interest, as are the subtleties and varieties of rhythm, then in the best periods of stained glass, the leading was a background subservient to and helping the design. But in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when, as it is interesting to note, music was at a low ebb in this country, the leading had no relationship with the picture, but was merely a series of squares. I often think of this when I am plodding through Boyce in A or Cooke in G, and compare them to two 18th-century windows in our South Transept. They have vitality and strength, but nothing like the spirituality and power of detaching one from earthly things as have Byrd's Masses for example, and some of our 13th-century windows.

I do not want to make you hide-bound. All things come into music at one time or another because it expresses all types of emotion. Sometimes it is necessary to make the pulse and the rigid bar over-ride everything else, as in a funeral march, for instance, which expresses in music the fact that death approaches all of us with sure and inevitable steps. But this is not the same thing as a bad pianist tramping through a Chopin Nocturne. Sometimes in moments of great intensity the pulse of the music seems to be held up for a moment, though in reality it is always moving on, even through a pause. So in life there are tense moments when one feels almost as if the heart ceased to beat, although we know that if it actually did, life would also cease. But this is not the same thing as a nervous organist pausing to draw stops, or the unrhymed singer pausing to take breath, or the uninspired composer pausing to scratch his head and think what to do next. (I counted eleven pauses and thirteen *rallentando*s in a shop ballad only the other day.) It is not my object to make you stiffer and therefore more like a corpse or the dead bough of a tree, but to induce you to follow lines of thought that will give you more freedom and happiness in your art.

In my last address I really preached from a text taken from Sir Hubert Parry. I cannot do better than conclude this one by quoting him again: 'Relation is the only reality. If everything is relative, the greater the capacity of mind for realising relations, the greater its scope, the greater its chance of enjoying itself.'

The President then proceeded to present the diplomas.

After the presentation of diplomas, Mr. G. D. Cunningham played upon the organ the following pieces from the January, 1930, syllabus:

#### FELLOWSHIP

Introduction and Passacaglia ... ... Alan Gray  
Allegro Con Grazia (5-4 time), from  
'Symphony Pathétique,' No. 6 (arr.  
by C. Macpherson) ... ... Tchaikovsky

Choral Prelude, 'Valet will ich dir Geben' J. S. Bach

#### ASSOCIATESHIP

Air, No. 2 of Three Short Pieces... Samuel Wesley  
Choral Improvisation, 'O ewigkeit du  
Donnerwort,' Op. 65, No. 42 ... ... Karg-Elert

A very hearty vote of thanks was awarded to Mr. Cunningham for his splendid recital (proposed by Dr. F. G. Shinn, seconded by Dr. H. E. Darke).

The President said a few words of welcome to Dr. Albert Ham, of Toronto, who was present on the occasion. Dr. Ham replied by congratulating the College on its great and continued success.

The meeting closed with enthusiastic thanks to the President (proposed by Dr. Alan Gray, seconded by Dr. Marchant).

The conversazione which followed was attended by a large number of members and friends, and was, as usual, a great success in every way.

#### A BLIND ORGANIST'S CAREER

Mr. Thomas White, a clever blind musician, is to retire in September after serving for thirty-four years as organist at Chilvers Coton Parish Church, Nuneaton, Warwickshire.

Mr. White was blind when born in 1862, and in addition, he had the misfortune to be left an orphan when only a few months old. At the age of ten his love for music and his fine voice attracted the attention of the late Rev. G. R. Pennington, who, with the help of the Guardians and some friends, had him sent to the Birmingham School for the Blind. He was there from 1873 to 1880, and was successful in winning the Gardner Scholarship of £30 a year. To this his friends added another £30 and he was sent to the Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind at Upper Norwood. Besides learning to play the pianoforte and organ he had his voice trained.

During his eight years' stay at Upper Norwood he had the honour of singing in the College Festivals before Queen Victoria and other members of the Royal Family. He often appeared on the same platform as Madame Albani, Madame Antoinette Sterling, and Madame Patti, and he sang at all the principal London halls, both alone and in concerted pieces.

Mr. White was among the students selected to visit Germany. They called at Brussels, singing before the King of the Belgians, and from there went to Berlin, where they gave concerts before well-known personages.

In England, Mr. White has been engaged in concerts in London, Birmingham, and other large cities. He has also sung at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, and Belfast. In later years his services have always been in great demand at local functions, and, despite his advancing age, his fine tenor voice has retained a great deal of its quality.

Prior to becoming organist at Coton Church—the Shepperton Church of George Eliot's novel—Mr. White was organist at St. Mary's (Abbey) Church, Nuneaton, and afterwards at Hartshill Parish Church. He always attributes a great deal of his success as a musician to the kindness of a Nuneaton lady, Miss Emily Swinnerton, who gave him financial assistance in his early days.

With the aid of a stick Mr. White still taps his way through the streets of Nuneaton unassisted.

The South-Eastern branch of the London Society of Organists visited Lewisham Congregational Church on July 6. Mr. Eric Brough gave a lecture on 'Possibilities in the Repertory of a Mixed-Voice Choir,' with illustrations, sung by the choir of the Church. Some interesting discussions also took place on various problems in Church choir work.

## THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ORGANISTS

In the course of a lecture on June 29 on plainchant as an aid to organized church community singing for clergy and people, its vocal accompaniment, and use in modern composition, Mr. Royle Shore remarked that, as plainsong was no longer regarded as a kind of toy for the ecclesiastically or mediævally minded, and modern musicians were becoming increasingly attracted by it, it was astonishing that the great schools of music should still ignore the subject. Efforts had been made from time to time to convince them of the need of seeing that their organ and composition students at least should be trained in the elements of what has become a musical science, since the researches of the Solesmes Monks and others had elevated it to its present position. At the 'Schola Cantorum,' Paris, under Vincent d'Indy, all the students go through a course of instruction in the subject, even though they are being trained to be public singers or instrumentalists. Mr. Shore said that it had been pointed out to both the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, as far back as 1915, that many of their organ students were under a disadvantage in view of the increasing number of appointments which could be held only by those who had some knowledge of plain-song. The lecturer appealed to the Society, in conjunction with the Royal College of Organists, to press this matter upon the schools of music in this country.

Examples of the vocal accompaniment of various kinds of plainchant in Latin and English, and extracts from the works of modern English composers, including Elgar, Vaughan Williams, and Bantock, were given by a body of singers under the conductorship of Miss Edna Howard, who, with Mr. Whitehead, was also responsible for the solo work. The large audience assisted in the plainchant.

## COLLEGE OF ST. NICOLAS

The Archbishop of Canterbury opened and dedicated the College of St. Nicolas, Chislehurst, the headquarters of the School of English Church Music, on July 3. The choir of the College was joined by the choirs of Westminster Abbey and Rochester Cathedral, the result being some admirable unaccompanied singing. (The proceedings took place in the open air, the building being unable to accommodate the large gathering, which included many distinguished musicians and clerics from all parts of the country). Among those taking part in the ceremony were the Deans of Westminster and Windsor, the Precentor of Westminster Abbey, and Sir Hugh Allen. The music comprised psalm-chants with faux-bourdons, well-known hymns, Stanford's anthem 'Glorious and powerful God,' and Orlando Gibbons's Te Deum.

In the course of his address the Archbishop made feeling reference to Canon Harold Hall Wright, in whose memory his widow had endowed the Choir School, and the Lady Mary Trefusis, one of the founders of the College. Memorials to both were unveiled in the College Chapel. After tea, the combined choirs and some of the guests joined in a happy impromptu concert on the terrace, singing under Dr. Nicholson's direction English madrigals and part-songs. The College is now in full working order, the Hostel is completely equipped, and all that is needed to set the seal on a notable enterprise is the advent of a full quota of students. We imagine that these will soon be forthcoming, for the educational facilities are of a type that cannot be obtained elsewhere, and the College buildings and surroundings can hardly be equalled for attractiveness.

A recital given at St. Oswald's, West Hartlepool, a few weeks ago was a good example of what may be done by an organist-pianist and a couple of string players. The programme comprised solos for organ (Bach, Franck, Darke), violin (Svensden), and 'cello (Bruch), and trios for pianoforte and strings (Bach, Haydn, and Svensden). The players were Miss Winifred Pigot, Mr. A. G. Y. Brown, and Mr. R. E. Burt.

## WESTMINSTER ABBEY: FESTIVAL OF CATHEDRAL AND COLLEGIATE CHURCH CHOIRS

The Abbey was filled to the doors on July 8 when ten Cathedral choirs and twelve from Collegiate Churches sang a programme that amounted to a survey of that distinctively English form, the Anthem. Here is the list, in order of performance: 'Let all mortal flesh,' Bairstow; 'O praise the Lord, ye saints above,' Byrd; 'O clap your hands,' Weelkes; 'O Lord, look down from Heaven,' Battishill; 'Glorious and powerful God,' Stanford; and 'Lord, Thou hast been our refuge,' Vaughan Williams. The hymns were: 'All people that on earth,' to Dowland's descant setting, and the Sequence for St. Edward's Day, to a tune by Dr. Sydney Nicholson. The service ended with Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens.' It would be difficult to over-praise the singing. The combination of pure, blended tone, dynamic range, and easiness was such as to make one speculate as to whether it could be equalled by any body other than one composed of picked English Cathedral singers. (There were nearly three hundred boys and men.) Most of the singing was unaccompanied, and here the finest results were obtained. The works contained many surprises, from the delightful chiming effects in the 'silver bells' passage in the Byrd to the passion in the Battishill. The inclusion of the Parry Ode was the only doubtful point. It calls for orchestral accompaniment, and the use of the organ (ably though it was handled) merely raised insoluble problems of balance and ensemble. Dr. Bullock conducted skilfully. Such a demonstration of English singing and Church music ought to be made an annual affair. On all grounds it is well worth the great pains and cost of organization.

## FREE CHURCH CHOIR UNION

The thirty-sixth annual Festival, held at the Crystal Palace on July 13, under the direction of Mr. Frank Idle, again demonstrated that, in spite of the gramophone, wireless, and other counter-attractions, there is still a very large number of people devoted to choral singing. The whole programme, which comprised works by Handel, Schubert, Gounod, Thiman, Idle, &c., was given with a precision and expressiveness that bore witness to infinite pains on the part of Mr. Idle. He had his forces well under control, and the performance generally was held to be one of the best ever given by the Union. The soloist was Miss Elizabeth Mellor, and in addition to the solo in Gounod's 'Lovely appear,' she sang Costa's aria 'I will extol Thee.' In Thiman's anthem 'Let all the world,' the parts for brass instruments added greatly to the effect of the organ accompaniment, which was played by the composer. The piece was encored. New compositions, specially written for the occasion by the conductor and Mr. J. A. Meale (who presided at the organ) were greatly appreciated by the very large audience. The Choir Unions deserve high praise for carrying on such excellent work in these difficult times.

C. J. M.

## GREGORIAN ASSOCIATION

The fifty-ninth Anniversary Evensong was sung at Westminster Abbey on June 20 under Capt. Francis Burgess. As the custom is at these services, the music was a judicious blending of plainsong and harmonized settings, parts of which were sung by a true and well-balanced semi-chorus.

Plainchant was used for the Psalms throughout, with the exception of the Glorias, which were sung in faux-bourdon arrangements. The Magnificat was enriched with verses by Viadana, and Palestrina's polyphony was drawn upon for alternate verses of the lovely 'Golden Sequence.' The choir had its biggest chance in the anthem, Anerio's 'Christus Factus Est,' and took it; in fact, the singing throughout was remarkable for its precision and good tone. The performance of the plainsong portions was more flexible than one would have believed possible with so large a choir.

The church was full, and Princess Beatrice was in the congregation.

P. W.

Seven hundred and fifty singers joined in the Bath and Wells Diocesan Annual Festival at Wells on June 20. (The figures are interesting as showing the problems of balance involved, especially in the male-voice choirs. There were 291 boy trebles, 24 male altos, 82 tenors, 120 basses, 127 women sopranos, and 39 contraltos.) The Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis were sung to a setting composed for the Festival by Basil Harwood, with additional accompaniment for two trumpets, two trombones, and drums. The anthem was a chorus from 'Samson'—'Then round about the starry throne.' Canon Davis, the Cathedral organist, conducted, and his assistant (not named in the report) accompanied.

Nearly a thousand singers took part in the annual Diocesan Choral Festival held at Truro Cathedral on June 20. The Canticles were sung to a setting by Stanford, and the anthem was Ley's 'Eternal Ruler of the ceaseless round.' Mr. Dykes Bower, the Cathedral organist, conducted, and Mr. G. H. Knight was at the organ. An innovation was the substitution of a middle voluntary for the sermon, Mr. Dykes Bower playing Schumann's Canon in B minor and Handel's 'Athaliah' Overture. During the morning a well-attended lecture-demonstration was given by Dr. Sydney Nicholson, who dealt with the musical rendering of the Choral Eucharist.

We have received a booklet giving the programmes of a series of twelve recitals of English organ music which Mr. Ambrose Porter is giving at Lichfield Cathedral. The series began in July and ends in September. It is a continuation of a previous venture of the kind which met with encouraging success. Altogether, Mr. Porter will have played a hundred and ninety-five works, representing a hundred and two composers. Although contemporary examples are in the majority, each programme includes some works by early English organ writers. This effort is one that deserves to be widely followed.

The choirs of the Archdeaconry of Grahamstown, South Africa, combined in a Festival at Grahamstown Cathedral on May 29, singing Walford Davies's 'God be in my head,' Bach's 'Jesu, Joy of man's desiring,' Geoffrey Shaw's 'Worship,' Varley Roberts's Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C, and Sydney Nicholson's Solemn Te Deum. The singers numbered two hundred, and some of them had travelled over fifty miles to take part. Mrs. C. H. Wood accompanied, and the Cathedral organist, Mr. Stephen Chantler, conducted. The Festival was a welcome revival, the event having lapsed since 1886.

At Exeter Cathedral, on June 27, the annual Festival of the Diocesan Choral Association was held, twenty-six choirs taking part. The Canticles were sung to Arnold in A, and the anthems were Ouseley's 'How goodly are thy tents' and Goss's 'The Wilderness.' The organist was Mr. Cyril Church, and the conductor Dr. Thomas Armstrong.

The East Glendalough Choral Festival took place on June 19 in St. Saviour's Church, Arklow, about three hundred and fifty singers taking part. The music included Parry's Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in D and Geoffrey Shaw's 'Ten thousand times ten thousand.' Mr. E. J. Youds, organist at the church, accompanied, and the Rev. N. Roberts conducted.

The organ at Waterford Cathedral is being rebuilt at a cost of £1,100 by Messrs. Alec Chestnut, of Waterford. When complete it will be a four-manual of fifty-three drawstops.

Messrs. Rushworth & Dreaper have recently built an organ—a two-manual with thirteen stops—for the Steynsrust Dutch Reformed Church, South Africa.

## RECITALS

Mr. P. P. Dickinson, Heaton Parish Church—Adagio and Fugue (Sonata No. 8), *Rheinberger*; Four Choral Improvisations, *Karg-Elert*; Prelude and Fugue in F minor, *Bach*.  
 Mr. Herbert Hodge, St. Lawrence Jewry—Sonata No. 6, *Rheinberger*; Air with Variations and Finale *Fugato, Smart*; Cornelius March, *Mendelssohn*.  
 Mr. F. G. Shuttleworth, St. Luke's, Redcliffe Square, S.W.—Fantasia and Fugue in E minor, *Silas*; *Benedictus, Reger*; Legend, *Grace*; Adagio in E, *Frank Bridge*; Finale (Sonata No. 5), *Rheinberger*.  
 Mr. Purcell J. Mansfield, Paisley Abbey—Fantasia in C, *Saint-Saëns*; Funeral March, *Grieg*; An Evening Meditation, *Mansfield*; Prelude and Fugue in B A C H, *Liszt*.

Mr. Ralph T. Langdon, St. John the Evangelist, Edinburgh—Passacaglia, *Bach*; Sonata No. 1, *Mendelssohn*; Quasi Marcia, *Karg-Elert*; Passacaglia, *Muffat*; Fantasia in D minor, *Gibbons*; Choral No. 3, *Franck*.

Mr. Guy Michell, St. Matthew's, Worthing—Agitato and Cantilène, *Rheinberger*; Allegretto in B minor, *Lemare*; Toccata, *Mulet*.

Mr. S. W. Robinson, St. Mary's, Nottingham—Sonata No. 3, *Mendelssohn*; Allegretto grazioso, *Frank Bridge*; Fugue, *Reubke*.

Mr. Allan Fortune, Ingrow Parish Church—Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, *Bach*; 'Morning—Day,' *Lemare*; Sonata No. 4, *Rheinberger*; Fantasia and Fugue, *Parry*.

Mr. John Pullein, St. Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow—Prelude, Fugue, and Chaconne, *Buxtehude*; Prelude and Fugue in A, *Bach*; Three Preludes on Welsh Hymn-Tunes, *Vaughan Williams*; Lament, *Grace*; 'An Easter Alleluia,' *Slater*.

Mr. W. A. Stevens, St. John's, Peterborough—Concerto Grosso No. 10, *Corelli*; Three Chorale Preludes, *Bach*; Legend, *Grace*; Sonata No. 6, *Mendelssohn*.

Mr. C. W. Harris Sellick, Burnley Parish Church—Prelude and Fugue in B minor, *Bach*; Fantasia and Fugue on B A C H, *Liszt*; Choral No. 3, *Franck*; Prelude on 'St. Cross,' *Parry*; Toccata, 'Symonds Yat,' *F. H. Wood*.

Mr. J. D. Macrae, Gillespie U.F. Church, Dunfermline—Sonata in the style of Handel, *Wolstenholme*; Fuga alla Gigue, *Bach*; Pastorale on 'Winchester Old,' *Farrar*; Bridal March and Finale, *Parry*.

Mr. J. D. Holl, St. Michael's, Brierley Hill—Prelude on 'Melcombe,' *Parry*; Sonata No. 1, *Borowski*; Fugue in E flat, *Bach*.

Mr. F. W. Quibell-Smith, St. Michael's, Brierley Hill—Grand Chœur No. 1, *Hollins*; Prelude on 'St. Michael,' *West*; Andante Moderato in C minor, *Frank Bridge*; Grand Chœur in D, *Guilmant*.

Miss Edna C. Howard, St. Clement Danes, Strand—Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, *Trio-Sonata* in E flat, and Three Chorale Preludes, *Bach*; March on a Theme of Handel, *Guilmant*.

Mr. C. H. Trevor, Clapham Parish Church—Prelude in C minor, *Bach*; Trio in B flat, *Rheinberger*; Quasi Scherzo, *Karg-Elert*; Carillon-Sortie, *Mulet*; Introduction and Allegro (Concerto No. 4), *Dupuis*.

Dr. Gordon Slater, Lincoln Cathedral—Chorale Preludes on 'The 100th Psalm-Tune,' *Purcell*; 'St. Columba,' *Robin Milford*; 'An Easter Alleluia,' *Slater*.

Mr. J. M. Preston, St. George's, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne—Fantasia on 'O sons and daughters,' *Alan Gray*; 'Spring Morning on Lebanon,' *MacKenzie*; Hymn to the Stars, *Karg-Elert*; Marche Pontificale, *Widor*.

## APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Pearce Hosken, choirmaster and organist, King's Weigh House Church, Grosvenor Square.  
 Mr. Philip B. Tomblings, organist and music master, Bloxham School.  
 Mr. Arthur E. Watts, choirmaster and organist, St. Andrew's, Stockwell.

## Letters to the Editor

### ORGAN PEDALLING: PAST AND PRESENT

SIR.—In the July issue of the *Musical Times* there are two interesting letters and an article, all bearing on the above subject.

Mr. Jevons refers to the 'modernised version of the lines laid down by Lemmens.' The lines laid down by Lemmens in the first twelve pedalling exercises of his 'School for the Pedal' leave no doubt that he viewed the pedal board as a *toe* instrument, so far as a student's first pedalling exercises are concerned, for these first twelve exercises are indicated to be played by *toes* only. In the preface to his 'Pedal School' he says:

'The easiest way of playing, and also the general mode, is to use the point of each foot alternately whenever the passages permit.'

In the same preface he says:

'A great many organists use only the "left" foot in playing the pedals. This faulty method causes the player to move the foot from one position to another, &c.'

This from Lemmens, about seventy or more years ago! Lemmens discloses an entirely different outlook upon the pedal board when he approaches the scales, and it is in these scales that he senses the true foundation of pedalling, viz., the principle which embraces the toe-short and heel-long key method. While pedal boards have short and long keys representing the sharps, flats, and naturals, so long will the toe-short and heel-long key remain the true basis of pedalling.

His (Lemmens's) footings of the scales of A, E, E flat, particularly, are a standing testimony to the fact that without a properly controlled and free oblique-angle movement of the feet the possibilities of pedalling are hopelessly curtailed. The term 'oblique-angle movement' embraces every degree of movement of the feet, from left to right of the heel, using the toe as a lever, and from left to right of the toe, using the heel as a lever, and the reverse of both in each case, and I use this term for want of a better or clearer one.

Regarding the thirty-four ways, or even forty-four ways of playing the first two groups of the Bach D major Fugue subject, who wants to play it in so many ways, anyhow? I merely gave them to show the definite possibilities of the oblique-angle movement, and to stress the point that without such freedom of movement modern pedalling is impracticable.

Mr. Jevons queries the heel-toe inwards movement. Why place any limitations on these movements? Lemmens's scales of A, E, B, majors, and G, E, B, minors, all start off with the very movement he queries, for in each case the left heel note is followed by the next higher scale note being played by the toe of the same foot. In some of these cases it would have been just as easy to start off with the toe, instead of the heel. It may be easier to play a heel note immediately to the left or right of a toe note than the reverse, because there is more leverage and support from the toe than from the heel as a momentary fulcrum, but freedom in either way should be secured by sufficient practice.

No wonder Mr. Jevons makes such a sweeping indictment as the following:

'... and in practice very awkward, ungainly, and quite impossible to tread naturally... (referring to the thirty-four ways of playing the Bach phrase), when he denounces the heel-toe inwards movement!'

Mr. George Goode, in his letter in the same issue of the *Musical Times*, refers to a work 'On Organ Playing' by Arthur Page. I have not seen this work. My late co-author, Mr. Meers, tried to secure a copy of it, but he was not successful. There are many books that advocate a free use of the heels, but I have never seen any before my Novello Primer of 1918 that definitely advocate the principle of the free use of heels and toes in the very first stages of pedalling, nor

have I seen any that endeavour to instil into the minds of organ students the importance and advantage of regarding the heel as of equal value as the toe, in the very first note-finding exercises.

Referring to the reprint of Dr. Barkworth's article 'Organ Pedal Technique' from the November, 1918, issue of the *Musical Times*, it contains some interesting novelties. Strangely enough, it was in July, 1918, that I wrote on the same subject in the *Musical Times* for that month, stressing many points which have since been embodied in other books of mine.

The idea of a revolving centre seat for the organ stool is not new, for many years ago my predecessor at St. George's Hall, the late Dr. Peace, told me that he had been asked to try one, but that he did not greatly favour the idea. On the other hand there are some who might prefer it, and there should be no difficulty in trying to discover a means of countersinking a revolving centre seat for the organ stool. I see no objection to it from the practical playing point of view, provided that a much more stable and level revolving seat is practicable than is the case with the revolving pianoforte seat, if any of these latter abominations still remain in use.

Speaking from a purely personal point of view, if no better revolving device could be produced than that of the revolving pianoforte stool, I should not hesitate to adhere to the modern adjustable non-revolving stool.

Playing in stocking feet might appeal to some, but I am afraid that pedalling, even with feather-weight pedal resistance, would not be a very pleasant affair.

Dr. Barkworth very summarily dismisses the shoe-heel, its absence 'merely making it necessary to set the stool an inch lower—that is all'!

I have pedalled in stocking feet, in slippers, in shallow-heeled house shoes, and in the normal walking shoe, and I feel that the latter, with a sole not too thin, is the most serviceable type for pedalling purposes. The firm leather sole gives a sufficient support for the soles of the feet, and the shoe-heels, of moderate depth, act as a useful leverage for the heels of the feet.

The short left- and right-foot half-scale formulae which Dr. Barkworth gives find their genesis in the Lemmens scales of A, E, and E flat. The Lemmens basis for these particular scales is excellent, and the toe-short and heel-long key principle which dominates these is admirable within a circumscribed compass of the pedal board. Yet, though it is possible to use a left-hand note high up the board, or a right-heel note at the bottom of it, it is by no means always easy, and even a revolving centre seat would not help matters very much.

Dr. Barkworth's footing of the upper octave of the E flat scale places the last three notes, B flat, C, D flat, for the r. toe, l. heel, and r. toe, returning the same way. My criticism of this instance of high left-heel notes is that there is nothing gained by playing the top C with the l. heel, nor is any principle sacrificed if the more logical footing is adopted, viz., playing that top C with the r. heel (B flat, C, D flat, with r. toe, r. heel, r. toe). Further, if the l. heel plays the top C, its poor unfortunate toe becomes an offending member, for it has nowhere to go in the ascending phrase, and forces the right to play its toe-note in an unnatural position, an awkward state of affairs which is accentuated by the immediately following toe notes of the r. foot.

Though the following is not exactly comfortable:

*Vide* Dr. Barkworth's D flat scale.



this is natural:



yet the latter takes the L. heel higher than in the D flat scale. The reason is that the context of the latter enables the feet to assume a natural position, whereas the former prevents it.

I read through Dr. Barkworth's translation of Nielsen's 'Technical Studies in Pedal Playing.' It is an exceedingly well thought-out treatise (the translation was published by Schirmer in 1904), giving many diagrams of the pedal board, all illustrating the straight board.

On p. 4, right-hand column, of my 'Science of Organ Pedalling' I have mentioned rules from the Nielsen treatise which I considered opposed to the natural dictates of the pedal board. The author, Nielsen, condemns the French type of heel for pedalling, but he does not go as far as his able translator, Dr. Barkworth, and recommend stocking feet.—Yours, &c.,

Liverpool.

HERBERT F. ELLINGFORD.

#### E LA MI'

SIR.—The term 'E la mi,' used in connection with the above service, which has puzzled 'Lay-Vicar' and yourself, is simply the old English Church-writer's way of expressing the note E according to the principles of the method of solmisation known as 'The Gamut,' a plan of the musical scale constructed from a series of seven ascending hexachords extending from bass G to E<sup>11</sup>, which was in use as long as the system of hexachords was recognised. The Greek letter Γ (*gamma*) was used to denote the first note (*Ut*) of the series—hence 'Gamut.' The sounds of which these hexachords are composed are sung (according to the rules of this system) to the syllables *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la*, the semitones falling between *mi* and *fa*. In addition to these syllables, the notes of each octave have the alphabetical names *A, B, C, D, E, F, G*, used in exactly the same positions on the Staff as at the present day; consequently, as the hexachords begin on different notes and constantly overlap each other, any given note will have its own letter-name and also the names of the syllables belonging to overlapping hexachords, and is known by the combination of letter and syllabic names. The following example will illustrate this:



Thus in the 'Gamut' C is named C *fa ut*, D is named *sol re*, E is named *E la mi*, and so on.

An accurate knowledge of the 'Gamut' was an essential part of the musical equipment of the choristers of the period, as is shown by the following quotation from Mr. John S. Bumpus's 'History of English Cathedral Music':

'In 1662 the Dean of the Chapel Royal issued an order by which it was decreed—"That if any knight or other person entitled to wear spurs, enter ye Chappell in that guise, he shall pay to ye quiristers ye accustomed fine: but if he command ye youngest quirester to repeat hys 'gamut' and he faile in ye so doing, the said Knight or other, shall not pay ye fine."

As Mr. Bumpus justly remarks: 'These hexachords in ascending overlapped one another, and as the notes were named by combining the overlapping names, the task was a fair test of the boy's musical knowledge, and amounted to the same thing as asking a sailor to box the compass.'

Dr. Creyghton is said to be one of the first musicians to use the keys of E flat and A flat.—Yours, &c.,

York Place,  
Whitefield, near Manchester.

FRANK S. STYLER.

#### THE HANDEL FESTIVAL MODEL AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE

SIR.—No doubt most of the present-day supporters of the Handel Festivals are familiar with the large model of the first Festival (held in 1857) which stands in the south transept of the Crystal Palace. Probably few have troubled to examine it in detail, or to note various amusing points. It is only fair, before mentioning the latter, to give some idea of the magnitude of the work which faced the designer of the model (whose name is unfortunately omitted from the case). The following is quoted from a programme of one of the early Festivals:

'This important meeting which was entitled the "Great Handel Festival" was held at the Crystal Palace on the 15th, 17th, and 19th June, 1857. . . . The chorus consisted of 2,000 voices and the band of 386 instrumentalists. A large organ was erected for the occasion.'

The modeller therefore had to fashion nearly two thousand four hundred figures each no more than 2-in. high, in addition to the orchestral instruments, music stands, and the organ, so perhaps he may be forgiven any little irregularities. When one adds that in all the two thousand odd figures it is difficult to find two alike, the painstaking nature of the work is evident.

The point that strikes one at a first glance is that, of the three hundred and eighty-six instrumentalists mentioned in the programme, the only ones provided with seats in the model are the 'cellists. Presumably the remainder stood throughout the three days' Festival. One or two violinists appear to be leaning negligently against the stand behind, so one assumes that they found it a tiring job. The vocalists were more fortunate, for they at any rate could sit on the steps. Another curious point is that, although the official record mentions only three hundred and eighty-six orchestral players, there are in the model no less than ninety-five each first and second violins, sixty-seven each of violas, 'cellos, and basses, i.e., three hundred and ninety-one string players without counting the wind players. The double-basses are in two rows round the back of the orchestra and also in two small groups in the aisles between the violins and violas. Each double-bass player has his attendant satellite in the form of a 'cello player seated (apparently on a soap box) at his right-hand side. This was the practice in those days. It is to be supposed that the modeller wanted to fill up all the available space, for in addition he placed one bass and one 'cello right in front under the conductor's nose, surrounded by a few scattered fiddles. Each double-bass is at any rate fingering the same note.'

Ah, but the attitudes! Every fiddler stands with his right leg slightly in advance of the left, in the best grand opera style. (The tight-fitting trousers of the period show off those legs to much more advantage than do the more ample 'bags' of the present generation.) Coats of all cuts and hues, frock-coats, cut-aways, &c., grace their well-waisted manly figures, while the coloured waistcoats would have warranted the conductor wearing sun-glasses.

Coming to the wind players, one finds quite a number of interesting things. We have already used up nearly four hundred of our three hundred and eighty-six (official) players! Nevertheless there are ten flutes and eight piccolos to begin with, so the size of the rest of the orchestra may be estimated. The *Musical Times* for May, 1857, gives the orchestra as follows: seventy-six firsts, seventy-four seconds, fifty each violas, 'cellos, and basses, nine flutes, nine oboes, nine clarinets, nine bassoons, twelve horns, twelve trumpets and cornets, nine trombones, three ophicleides, nine serpents and bass-horns, three drums, six side-drums (three hundred and ninety in all).

And those poor flutes! Four of them are sitting between the trumpets and clarinets, while four of the piccolos are wedged at the back between the horns and bassoons! The rest of the wood and brass are

dotted here and there in patches, a fair number of them sitting entirely surrounded by string players.

There are three timpanists with seven drums between them, and one 8-ft. upright drum just below the organist's seat. The poor organist must have had a nervous breakdown afterwards. A curious feature is that standing in the gangways between the banks of vocalists and well to the back of the orchestra are six serpent players. A couple of bass horns are similarly placed, but nearer to the band. What a penetrating tone those serpents must have had! They are at least 30-ft. from the orchestra proper, and separated from one another by solid masses of vocalists.

There are three organ players (all standing) to manipulate the instrument specially constructed for the occasion. An interesting feature of the organ is that the top centre row of pipes in the ornamental front are lying in a horizontal position pointing out over the heads of the choir. The pipes are of conical section, presumably some sort of trumpet, and are apparently still in place in the present organ, though now in an upright position.

The *Musical Times* of July, 1857, gives the following account of the performance:

'Lofty enthusiasm, noble patriotism, sympathetic grief, stern resolves, feelings of adoration and reverential awe, by turn swayed the imagination as the chorus wailed forth its grief, uttered its declamation, gave forth its defiant challenge to the enemy, demanded to be led to victory . . .'

The designer of the model must have read that article, for he has succeeded in portraying all the emotions on the two thousand odd faces, albeit it seems a little peculiar to see a group of tenors registering 'sympathetic grief' adjacent to a smiling band of sopranos apparently demanding to be led to victory. Perhaps they only wanted a chance to get at the 'serpents' in their midst.

It may seem a little unkind thus to poke fun at this really splendid model, but the enumeration of these little points serves, in fact, to accentuate the patience and care taken in erecting such a model in a space no more than about 9-ft. wide by 5-ft. deep.

One shudders to think what fantastic nightmare Epstein would have constructed.—Yours, &c.,

L. SWINYARD.

#### THE BRAILLE CENTENARY

SIR,—You have so kindly referred in your columns to the great Braille Centenary effort of the National Institute for the Blind, that I venture to hope that you will allow me to draw attention to a remarkable response made by a tiny village in Sussex. Here, so notable an instance has been given of what can be done 'where there's a will,' that we at the National Institute venture to hope other villages and small towns throughout the country will feel encouraged to emulate the example.

On July 7 a double performance of Mendelssohn's 'Hymn of Praise' (with the Sinfonia—three movements) took place at the Parish Church of Keymer, with orchestra, organ, and chorus—seventy performers—under the conductorship of the wife of the Rector, an able amateur musician.

As a result, a sum of over £20 was raised in response to the Braille Centenary Appeal.

May I also correct an erroneous impression which has somehow got abroad that the Braille Centenary Festival is to take the form of a big central performance in London of the 'Hymn of Praise'?

Instead of this, the Institute is relying on the individual help of its friends, each in his own locality, and I would suggest that there are few churches which could not render at least some excerpt from the Cantata, if only the duet and chorus 'I waited for the Lord,' and at the same time arrange for a contribution to be sent to the National Institute as an act of thanksgiving that the sighted and the blind have at long length the mutual advantage of the printed page, thanks to the invention of the printing press by Gutenberg in 1440 and of the embossed script by Louis Braille in 1829.

Truly, in the words of the Cantata itself, 'The Night is departing . . . Let all men praise the Lord.'—Yours, &c.,

EDWARD WATSON

224-6-8, Gt. Portland Street, (Organizing Secretary, W.I. *Braille Centenary Appeal, 1929*).

#### A CORRECTION

SIR,—In the résumé of my lecture given before the Musical Association on April 23, which appeared in the *Musical Times* for July, I am reported to have said, 'To Elizabethan composers the Authorised Version of the Bible was a new thing—a wonderful and fresh source of verbal imagery and inspiration.' Dr. E. H. Ezard, of Cambridge, kindly drew my attention to the inaccuracy of this statement before I myself had seen it. Whether a *lapsus linguae* on my part, or a *lapsus calami* on the reporter's part, is responsible, I do not know, but I hasten to ask you kindly to correct the error by the substitution of the following: 'To Elizabethan composers Coverdale's first complete English Bible (1535) and the English Prayer Book (1549), which contained the Psalter as translated in the Great Bible of 1539, were new things—wonderful and fresh sources of verbal imagery and inspiration.'—Yours, &c.,

CYRIL B. ROOTHAM.

4, Huntingdon Road,  
Cambridge.

#### MECHANISED MUSIC

SIR,—Has Mr. Rutland Boughton ever been marooned for years with never a chance of listening to good music? Of course not.

The gramophone has brought music of the best sort to many who, from force of circumstances, never get an opportunity of hearing it actually played. I venture to think that mechanised music has done a great deal to educate people who get only the chance of reading press criticisms. Mr. Brian Everest says he has turned on the Brahms Quintet in F thirty-five times. I have worn out three records of Sir Edward Elgar's arrangement of Bach's Fantasia and Fugue played by the L.S.O., and as for the records of the English Singers (I have them all), I must refrain from putting them on any more until these beautiful madrigals are reproduced again—I hope by the same singers.

As an old quartet-player in the past, it has been a delight to me to hear the Flonzaley, the Léner, and other quartet-players whom I have never heard, and, I fear never shall, except through the gramophone.

The last great quartet I heard at first-hand was the Joachim Quartet, and I am under sixty years of age. The gramophone is better than nothing at all. As for the wireless, I cannot afford a set.—Yours, &c.,

Cumberland.

COUNTRY DOCTOR.

#### 'SOPRANOS ARE RARE'

SIR,—In his letter in your July issue, Mr. Travers Adams makes a most sweeping assertion. He says that nine out of ten of the soprano vocalists who appear in the programmes issued by the B.B.C. are not even mezzo-sopranos—they are high contraltos. Will Mr. Adams, as he undertakes to do, please supply proof of this? It is a matter of interest to many of us who hold that soprano voices are by no means so scarce as Mr. Adams thinks.—Yours, &c.,

4, Fielding Road, W.M. BELL PORTER.  
West Kensington Park, W.14.

SIR,—As one who happens to be conversant with the difficulties which are alleged to confront the B.B.C. in the engaging of vocalists, I should like to say that in my opinion, the conclusion expressed by Mr. Travers Adams in his letter of July, though apparently courteous, in reality goes far to offend the canons of good taste. I put it to the thoughtful readers of his letter whether they consider Mr. Travers Adams to be a more competent judge of a soprano vocalist than the highly expert selectors appointed by the B.B.C.—Yours, &c.,

W.2.

E. A.

SIR.—It has given me unqualified pleasure to read the letter sent in by Mr. H. Travers Adams. I am not advancing any comment as to responsibility, but I agree emphatically with all that Mr. Travers Adams has written with respect to the so-called sopranos who are engaged by the B.B.C. His experience is precisely the same as my own and of many of my friends and acquaintances who have listened with me.

Our ears have been pained by the thin, superficial, hard quality, and by the tone so painfully lacking in colour, warmth, or richness, of most of these singers. Why they are called sopranos passes my comprehension, for the compass of the ballads sung by many of them does not exceed F (fifth line), and even in this limited compass the upper notes are taken with an amount of force and effort that an ordinary real soprano would not exhibit. Surely from the thousands who are given an audition better results might be expected.—Yours, &c.,

ELEANOR McALLISTER.

'The Gables,'  
East Acton Lane, W.3.

SIR.—On several occasions I have, in the leading musical papers, expressed my inability to subscribe to what I have held to be exaggerated statements on singers and singing made by Mr. Travers Adams. I gladly admit that there has always been valuable information to be gained from the published letters, articles, and works of a teacher of his experience; but I disagree with his latest publicly-expressed opinion. He gives the impression that the lower voices in women are much more common than the higher. He is right in regard to men, but, as far as my memory serves me, during the last thirty years there have appeared in public not more than five or six *real* contralto singers. The great majority of singers, on the other hand, have been sopranos. Perhaps some more of your readers would care to express their opinions.—Yours, &c.,

'Dulce Domum,'  
Tunbridge Road,  
Southend-on-Sea.

PEARCE SMALL.

SIR.—As a sincere admirer of Mr. Travers Adams, in company with many of my friends and acquaintances, I feel nevertheless bound, though with regret, to record publicly my opinion that on occasions he is swayed more by impulse than reason. His statement, 'Nine out of ten who appear on the B.B.C. programmes as sopranos are high contraltos' can be due to impulse only. It certainly is not accurate. If he desires to discover the reason for the unsatisfactory performances of the great majority of present-day professional singers of all descriptions, he will find the solution set forth in his own two latest publications, *i.e.*, the lack of physical development. Other explanations are often purely fanciful.—Yours, &c.,

F. H. K.

#### 'OUR BERLIOZ EXCLUSIVES'

SIR.—Although I would like to state at once that I am in hearty agreement with 'Feste' in regard to the Berlioz controversy, I cannot subscribe to his dictum that 'Berlioz's orchestration worked magic.'

Berlioz was undoubtedly an innovator and an explorer in orchestration, and as such he deserves (and receives) the admiration of musicians. But I have never been able to appreciate the claim made by his admirers that the Berlioz orchestra sounds well or effective—with exceptions, of course. He seems to be ever conceiving stunts and special effects, which, however interesting as experiments, have little musical value.

In my humble opinion, his best all-round work—musically and orchestrally—is the interesting 'Romeo and Juliet' Symphony, in which not only the three well-known orchestral movements (Fête at the Capulet Palace, 'Queen Mab' Scherzo, Love Scene), but also several of the choral movements, notably the Funeral March, achieve an orchestral and musical beauty which

is generally absent from his other work. His 'Hungarian March' and 'Invitation to the Waltz' have always seemed to me ineffective, and inferior to Liszt's version of the former and Weingartner's version of the latter pieces.

I do not think that any honest musician who dislikes Berlioz can be accused of prejudice. No composer had finer ideals and ideas—on paper; his life was one continual fight for what he conceived to be the truth. His best contribution to music, to my mind, is his literary work.

I add that I am a musician and conductor who has tried, over and over again, to like Berlioz, and who has studied his scores with a view to including them in the répertoire of the various orchestras he has had to direct.—Yours, &c.,

X.

New York City.

[The views expressed in this letter are of special interest, as the writer—who asks us to allow him the cloak of anonymity—is a conductor of international reputation.—EDITOR.]

#### A DIFFICULT RHYTHM

SIR.—In your 'Answers to Correspondents' you refer to the Presto of Beethoven's Quartet and the opening of the C minor Symphony as instances in which it is difficult to make the rhythm clear. Is not the opening of Beethoven's 'Hallelujah' Chorus (from the 'Mount of Olives') another case in point?



Besides the difficulty of preventing the three semiquavers from sounding like a triplet, there is the difficulty of playing (I have no copy at hand, and may have quoted incorrectly):



or:



with absolute accuracy. It is also a strain for an organist to keep this up for a whole page. I have had the opportunity in the past of consulting two first-rate players about Ex. 1. One gave the equivalent of the 'tiny stress' you speak of by playing the semiquaver E short and seeming to linger slightly upon the D. The effect was certainly clear, and the L.H. was crisply and accurately played. Later on in the movement where there are quaver triplets against  $\text{F} \#$  one played it without any relaxation of pace, the other yielded slightly. Both agreed that it was exceptionally hard to play properly, and were not ashamed to practise it before a performance.

What you say about the 'definition' disappearing in the opening of the C minor Symphony might be illustrated by the opening of Widor's familiar Toccata in F. As the result of 'too much pace and too little thought' some organists rob it of brilliancy, and give to the semiquavers almost the effect of sustained chords. That was not the method of the two brilliant organists (both now dead) of whom I have spoken. Nothing could be more exciting, and every note told, but the pace was adapted to the building and was never unduly fast.—Yours, &c.,

Mus. B.

Brighton.

#### 'THE PILGRIM OF LOVE'

SIR.—Can any of your readers throw light upon the authorship of the words of the above song? In Novello's edition, edited by W. A. Barrett, the words are ascribed to Mrs. Opie, but in other editions the author is given (where at all) as Dimond. For local reasons I should be very glad if someone could clear the matter up.—Yours, &c.,

RICHARD LOWNE.

Norwich.

## ORGAN RECITALS AND THE PRESS

SIR.—'Cet animal est très méchant, quand on l'attaque, il se défend'—that's me, right enough, but is that what BM/BNXK calls being 'bitter'? Out upon this mealy-mouthed 'well-bred' (!) 'gentlemanly' (!!) age that so badly needs some 18th-century directness and frankness of speech!

So far from bearing the musical world a grudge I am very grateful to it in one respect, at least, for convincing me of that which—by your leave—I already know, that is, that whatsoever I be I am not a nonentity. When I think of the slander and calumny that have been the portion of the greatest ones and then consider the very satisfying helping that has been served out to your most humble, oblieged, and (more or less) obedient servant, I am greatly lifted up in heart.—Yours, &c.,

KAHKHOSRU SORABJI.

SIR.—In his notice of my performance of Karg-Elert's Sixty-six Choral-Improvisations in the July issue of the *Musical Times*, your Scottish correspondent says that this performance was 'claimed' to be the first complete performance in Britain. It was not only 'claimed' to be the first complete performance in Britain, but *was* the first complete performance 'nicht nur in Britain, sondern überhaupt,' on the authority of Karg-Elert himself. I am not in the habit of claiming 'first performances' irresponsibly.

It may be of interest to your readers that I intend in the very near future to give a complete Karg-Elert Festival of organ-music (eight recitals) in various centres, and, later, pianoforte recitals of new music by Kodály, Bloch, Bartók, and Sorabji.—Yours, &c.,

27, Langlands Road,  
Newlands, Glasgow.

ERIK CHISHOLM.

[Surely Mr. Chisholm is too touchy! All who write reports of musical events know from experience that the claim 'First performance' has to be accepted with caution, save when it has to do with a brand new work. Karg-Elert's Sixty-six Choral Improvisations were published twenty years ago, and every one of them must have been played many times by English organists. Would a pianist who played the whole of Beethoven's Sonatas at three recitals be able to claim that he had given the first complete performance? The Karg-Elert pieces, though published under one opus number, were no more intended to be played straight off than were the Sonatas. We do not wish to appear to under-rate Mr. Chisholm's achievement, but we think he attaches too much importance to a point that is incapable of proof, and that would not matter very much anyway.—EDITOR.]

Mr. Stanley Nicholas writes to say that, owing to removal, he wishes to dispose of several years' issues, in good condition, of the *Musical Times*. He will give them to the first applicant. His address is 20, Waunllwyd, Nantymoel, near Bridgend, South Wales.

## The Amateurs' Exchange

Under this heading we insert, free of charge, announcements by amateur musicians who wish to co-operate with others.

Tenor wishes to meet accompanist for mutual practice of songs, ballads, &c. Birmingham and district.—

L. M. KIMBERLEY, c/o 10, Suffolk Street, Birmingham. Gentleman pianist wishes to meet vocalist or instrumentalist for mutual practice. S.E. London district.—

—B. A. B., c/o *Musical Times*.

Pianist wishes to meet violinist for mutual practice. Afternoon or evening.—Miss N. ROBINSON, 118, Adelaide Road, N.W.3.

Amateur instrumentalists required to form an orchestra to accompany choral society. Weekly rehearsals near Elephant and Castle, S.E.—HON. SECRETARY, 67, New Cut, Lambeth, S.E.1.

Young gentleman pianist wishes to meet violinist or vocalist for mutual practice. Would also like to meet another pianist. Bradford, Yorks, district.—H. L., c/o *Musical Times*.

Violinist, cellist, and bass wanted for mutual weekly rehearsal.—30, Revelow Road, S.E.4.

Good instrumental players wanted to form an orchestra to assist in the production of an amateur opera at Glasgow.—R. B., c/o *Musical Times*.

String player wishes to meet pianist (gentleman) for mutual practice of sonatas, and as accompanist. N. London.—BRATSCHE, c/o *Musical Times*.

Pianist (gentleman), excellent reader, wishes to meet string players for trio work, &c. Chelmsford district. Also plays viola.—A. G. M., c/o *Musical Times*.

Lady accompanist wishes to meet vocalist for mutual practice. Finchley district.—M. W., c/o *Musical Times*.

Young lady pianist wishes to meet violinist or another pianist for mutual practice. Would also like to join an amateur orchestra or choir. Classical music. Manchester or Burton districts.—Miss M. M. WINSHIP, Platt Bank, Chinley, Derbyshire (via Stockport). Pianist and violinist wish to meet cellist for mutual practice. N.W. district.—LEE, 14, Victoria Villas, Kilburn, N.W.6.

Viola player wanted for mutual practice of chamber music. Sundays, 11 a.m.—6, Newton Street, Hyde, near Manchester.

Vocalist (beginner) wishes to meet accompanist for mutual practice. Streatham district.—H. T., c/o *Musical Times*.

Young lady vocalist wishes to meet accompanist for mutual practice. N. London preferably.—E. MENDES, 5, Stanley Gardens, Hampstead, N.W.3.

Young gentleman pianist wishes to meet another for mutual practice. S.E. London.—B. F., c/o *Musical Times*.

## Competition Festival Record

## THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL MOVEMENT IN SHROPSHIRE

This movement originated in 1927, when one district Festival was held under the directorship of Mr. Geoffrey Shaw, and proved so popular that in 1928 three other districts launched a Festival.

The objects of the movement are as follows: (1.) To promote a love of music in the schools; (2.) To provide intercourse between teachers of music in schools which will be helpful in the teaching of the subject; (3.) To inculcate such a love for massed singing that boys and girls will, in later life, associate themselves with the musical activities of those villages and towns in which they live; (4.) To hold annual Musical Festivals, at which schools shall sing, and at which both children and teachers may receive from the musical director in charge helpful hints and criticism.

The Festivals are non-competitive in character, and are organized by committees of teachers and others interested in music generally. Each school taking part prepares a set programme of music for a massed concert and also presents at least four songs, two of which are chosen to be sung before the director on the day of the Festival. Schools are arranged in suitable classes according to size and character, and when all the schools in a particular class have sung they receive helpful criticism from the director and a confidential report is handed to each conductor. The day concludes with a combined rehearsal and massed concert.

This year four Festivals have been held, and in order to co-ordinate the work the central committee was fortunate enough to secure the services of Mr. Cyril Winn as director for the series. Marked improvement can be reported in the style of the singing, and the response shown at the four massed concerts was excellent. The benefits derived by the children who compose the audience during the auditions and the

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inspiration received from participation in a massed effort are of inestimable value, particularly to those schools in isolated districts. The size of the massed choirs ranged from four hundred to six hundred voices, and the programme of music consisted of national, folk, modern, and classical songs, and schools selected by the director sang individually.

The following is a summary of the work done at one Festival: Number of schools entering, 27; number of children who sang during the day, 796; massed choir, 600; number of different songs sung during the day, 115.

Sight-reading continues to make headway and forms an integral part of the Festival movement, but at present remains a voluntary effort.

#### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMPETITIVE CHOIRS

The fourth annual summer conference of the National Association of Competitive Choirs was held on Saturday, June 15, in the Town Hall, Bolton.

Upwards of a hundred delegates attended from all parts, and were warmly welcomed by the Mayor of Bolton (Alderman F. Cheadle), who expressed the hope that the Association would long continue its good work in bringing music into the life of the people.

The chair was ably occupied by the president of the Association, Mr. John E. Turner (Halifax).

Major J. T. Bavin (Director, Education Department of the Federation of British Music Industries) gave a practical and very helpful address on choral conducting.

A paper was read by Mr. Alfred Higson on the 'Competitive Festival from the Competitor's Point of View.' This covered a wide field, ranging from the unsuitability of many Festival rooms to the vexed question of the merits, or otherwise, of performing from memory in competitions.

Mr. Higson strongly condemned the use of the marking sheet supplied by the Federation of Musical Festivals, arguing that it was a hindrance to clear thinking, especially in the case of judges with whom arithmetic was not a strong point. He contended that wiser decisions would be arrived at if adjudicators were allowed to sit back and listen to a performance without the hindrance of writing and adding up marks. He was of opinion that decisions should be based on quality, technique, and expression. Mr. Higson proceeded to criticise the attitude of some adjudicators in expecting choirs to memorise Festival music. A solo performance from memory might be a simple feat, but the task of memorising with sixty voices working together meant intensive study. He thought marks for memory might be added as an extra, but that the use of copies ought not to operate against choirs in Festivals.

Mr. Higson also criticised the principle of massed performances, stating that in spite of the opinion of the press they were not popular as the climax to a Festival. He was of opinion that the system of setting choirs to sing one set of pieces in the afternoon and another set in the evening might be amended. If all finalists could start from 'scratch' there would be a better chance of obtaining a satisfactory decision. The question of money-prizes and grants was also touched upon.

The absence of Dr. Herman Brearley deprived the Conference of hearing the views of a very able and popular adjudicator.

Votes of thanks were suitably moved and seconded by Mr. A. Knight (Wigan) and Mrs. Bourne (Barrow).

After tea a number of the delegates were taken to view the historic building of Smithill's Hall, by kind permission of Col. Ainsworth.

In our report of the Kent Festival (July *Musical Times*, p. 642), we stated that the entries had fallen from last year's 'best ever' of 700 odd to 570. This was a slip. This year's entries reached the excellent total of 717; moreover, the bank balance on the right side shows an increase.

BALHAM (June 18-24).—At the third Festival there were over a thousand entries, more than a half of these being for dancing—classical, operatic, national, character, demi-character, and ballroom. The last included Charlestons for competitors over sixteen, under sixteen, under thirteen, under eleven, under nine, and under eight. Of the remaining five hundred the majority were pianists or singers, the general standard of whose performances was praised by the adjudicators. Choral singing did not occupy an important place in the scheme.

BOURNEMOUTH (July 6-13).—Not the least noteworthy feature of the third annual Festival was the increased number of conquests achieved by competitors from other parts; a sign, surely, of healthy growth. The last was seen on the opening day of one of the most valuable trophies, Yeovil Town Band winning for the third successive year the Rotary Challenge Shield, and thus securing permanent possession. Sandecote School's fine choir of girls proved similarly successful in respect of the shield presented by Mr. Hamilton Law; and the boys from Boscombe St. John's retained the cup they had held for the past two years. Bournemouth Amateur Orchestra again won the Sir Dan Godfrey Cup, despite the very capable and interesting way in which the test music—the third and fourth movements of the 'St. Paul's' Suite for strings (Holst)—was handled by the Herbert Ware Orchestra from Cardiff. Bournemouth Labour Male-Voice Choir lost both its cups; one (presented by the patron of the Festival, the Earl of Malmesbury) going to the Wessex Harmonic Choristers—a capital little choir from Weymouth, the other to the Southampton Male-Voice Choir. After winning one cup, the West Norwood Ladies' Choir heard Prof. Granville Bantock make it known to everyone concerned that they would have had another but for not using the prescribed edition of Schubert's 'The Lord is my Shepherd.' Five viola players were keen enough to figure in one or other of the two grades; and string ensemble classes attracted distinctly encouraging entries. The week's big time-table got out of hand now and again; but officials as a whole worked energetically and well. The closing stages of the Festival, at the Winter Gardens, were marked by quite a refreshing demonstration of partisanship, which would have done no discredit to a football final. Immediately following the Southampton Male-Voice Choir's cup triumph (referred to above) came the conquest achieved by the Southampton Musical Society, who captured the grand choral shield. Both of these comparatively youthful combinations were conducted by Mr. Arnold Williams, and as soon as some of his stalwart singers could get at him he found himself lifted shoulder high, and 'chaired' exultantly across the hall.

T. W. C.

CLEETHORPES (June 25-29).—This twenty-year-old Festival was well supported by competitors from its six-county area. Twenty of its hundred classes were for choirs, senior and junior. Hull Gleemen (Mr. A. Brown) were the leading competitors, their fine standard giving them first place in the alto lead and chief male-voice sections. Mansfield and Sutton Co-operative Choir (Mr. F. Ward) were first in the mixed-voice and Bramley (Mr. C. A. Holgate) in the female-voice section. Women's Institutes of fifty to a hundred voices put up an excellent competition; fifteen choirs sang Dyson's 'Thanksgiving' and Purcell's 'We spirits of the air,' Helperby being first and Romany and Nawton tying for second place a mark behind. One of the most interesting of the solo classes was that for Lieder-singing, in which both singers and accompanist came under adjudication. The winners were Miss V. M. Williams and Miss D. Middleton, of Cleethorpes. The Festival showed all-round prosperity, one of the signs being bigger and better elocution classes.

LEAMINGTON (June 19-22).—Over fifty choirs came to sing on the last day of this important meeting. A London choir—the South-West Choral Society—was the most successful, winning first place among ten

female-voice choirs and seven mixed-voice choirs. The second places were won respectively by Mr. William Turner's choir from Nottingham and the Nottingham Philharmonic Society. There were twelve male-voice choirs, the best being Coventry Welsh Gleemen and the second-best Leicester City. Women's Institutes made a good class, with nine competitors; Henley-in-*Arden* won the prize by a mark. The Festival attracted eight hundred and sixty entries, representing over five thousand persons, and large audiences were the rule.

The London Sunday School Choirs Annual Festival was held at the Crystal Palace on June 22. In the choral competitions Hanwell Wesleyan won the Barnard Shield for junior choirs, and Willesden District Choir carried off the Founder's Shield for mixed-voice choirs. The Jubilee Shield was won by the Brownhill Road Baptists for the second year. In the afternoon about three thousand juniors gave a concert, conducted by Mr. H. W. Marchant; and in the evening the Festival Choir sang a fine programme (Haydn, Brahms, Schumann, and Elgar) under the direction of Mr. Frank Creed.

## Sixty Years Ago

From the *Musical Times* of August, 1869 :

After some discussion, the Government grant of £500 to the Royal Academy of Music (which had been withheld for a twelvemonth), passed the House of Commons on Thursday, the 22nd ult.

The results of the examinations in music, at the Society of Arts, which have lately been made known, show that Tonic Sol-fa pupils have repeated their successes of former years. In the examination which Mr. G. A. Macfarren conducts in Elementary Musical Composition, the paper may be worked either in ordinary or Tonic Sol-fa notation, and the examination is open on equal terms to students of every system, the Tonic Sol-faists giving the prizes and paying the expenses of the examination. Only three out of the fifty-five certificates are, however awarded to other than Tonic Sol-faists.

We have received letter from a correspondent, who signs himself 'A poor lover of Music,' complaining that concert tickets are as a rule bought up by agents, and sold to the public at a price far beyond that advertised by the concert-giver. There is nothing new in this. Mr. Charles Dickens, during his readings in America, told his audience that he should be glad to appear some evening before a comparatively empty room, if the public by refusing to purchase tickets at an advanced rate could thus throw them upon the hands of those who lived by such a system. We should be glad if a remedy like this could be tried in London; for assuredly the evil is rapidly spreading.

## ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC

The outstanding feature of the students' chamber concert on June 19 was undoubtedly the singing of Brahms's Quartet 'Zigeunerlieder' by May Turtle, Irene Morden, Olive Darley, and Valette Iacopi. All have good voices, above the usual standard of students indeed; they sang, moreover, with keen intelligence and ensemble, and may be congratulated on giving a sound performance. A string quintet—'Pastorale' in G minor—by F. Nellie Daniels, a student, shows signs of ability, but is immature. Still the young composer should try again. It was sympathetically played. Very well played, too, by Helen Gaskell and Margot Wright was the Suite for oboe and pianoforte in D minor by Rosalie Bridgeman, an ex-student. The work is cleverly constructed, but is too long. Muriel G. Crowther has written two little songs, 'Sleepy Head' and 'The Buckle,' which she sang herself to her own accompaniment at the pianoforte. There is a place in

the musical universe for this class of composition. The music is refreshingly light, but distinguished by pretty neatness. Laurence O'Neill, who has a real bass voice, sang 'Possenti Numi, Iside,' in promising fashion.

The R.A.M. Club gave a social and musical evening on June 24, when M. Nicholas Orloff, the well-known Russian pianist, played an interesting programme to the great content of the large gathering of members and their friends. The Chopin group was especially appreciated, and Mr. Orloff gave two encores after having been recalled many times. At the conclusion of the concert he was entertained by the Principal, Mrs. McEwen, Lady Cooper (the President of the Club), and others.

The annual Operatic Week took place at the New Scala Theatre from July 8 to 13, a special account of which will be found on p. 745. F.

The following awards have been made: Alfred J. Waley Prize (violin) to Margot Macgibbon (Australia), Frederic Grinke being highly commended; Swansea Eisteddfod Prize (sopranos and mezzo-sopranos) to Gwyneth Owen (soprano) (Ferndale), Beatrice Gittins being highly commended and Marguerita Hughes commended; Albanese Prize (pianists) to Dorothy Manley (Blackburn), Frank Britton being very highly commended and Gwenyth Misselbrooke commended; Gilbert R. Betjemann Memorial Prize (all voices) to Freda Townson (Bolton), Joan Coxon, Gwendolene Embley, and Dorothy Haigh being highly commended and Muriel Page commended; Parepa-Rosa Prize (contraltos) to Esther Hulbert (Goodmayes), Ann Hughes being highly commended and Kathleen Whittome commended; Cecil Martin Prize (elocution) to Geoffrey Davies (Liverpool), Alice Langham being highly commended and Muriel Page commended; Isabel Jay Memorial Prize (sopranos) to Freda Townson (Bolton), Jean Campbell-Kemp being very highly commended and Grace Reynolds commended; Lionel Monckton Scholarship (composition) to Muriel G. Crowther (London), Dorothy Parke being highly commended.

## ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

The month of July provided an exceptionally full list of fixtures, for not only were the annual examinations so extensive as to dominate the last two weeks of the term, but about a dozen concerts and a performance of current repertory by the Opera Class took place, and a new mime-ballet was produced. The last proved to be a most engaging trifle by Penelope Spencer, who superintended the production. It deals with a mother anxious to marry her daughter to an elderly wooer, but, as is only to be expected, the daughter prefers a much younger suitor, who eventually triumphs through a neat stratagem, and leaves the elderly couple to console themselves by marrying each other. Movements selected from Handel's harpsichord works provided the musical accompaniment, scored for small orchestra and conducted by Leonard Isaacs, an Associated Board Exhibitioner of the College. The Opera Class gave Leoncavallo's 'Pagliacci,' under the conductorship of Mr. H. Grunebaum, and proved that the strenuous work demanded by the recent production of the 'Magic Flute' had not led to the neglect of regular operatic training.

The orchestral concerts of the month, four in number, showed the qualities of the three orchestras to be many and varied. A concerto concert, and a more orthodox concert, by the First Orchestra under Dr. Malcolm Sargent, attracted unusually large audiences, the most formidable tasks undertaken being R. Vaughan Williams's 'Pastoral' Symphony and Brahms's D minor Pianoforte Concerto. The other two concerts, by the Second and Third Orchestras under Dr. Sargent and Mr. W. H. Reed respectively, gave a group of young conductors practical experience of appearing before an audience. There were also many recitals, chamber concerts, and informal concerts, which were conspicuous for first performances of works

by students, and an interesting group of songs composed by the Duchess of Atholl, a former Honorary Scholar of the College.

The last Patrons' Fund Rehearsal of the term was devoted chiefly to new works by British composers, Dr. Malcolm Sargent conducting. Miss Imogen Holst's 'Persephone' proved to be a work of considerable depth and imagination, with an abundant promise for the future development of the young composer's individuality. Mr. Blower's 'Wicklow Hills' offered in a small compass charming pictures of the associations conjured up by the romantic subject. The last movement of Mr. Cuthbert Osmond's Symphony in E flat, of which the first three movements had been heard at previous rehearsals, was an appropriate finale to its predecessors, artistic and well-knit, with a deft use of thematic material. The programme included also a soloist and a conductor, Miss Rene Sweetland giving an excellent performance of César Franck's Symphonic Variations under the direction of Mr. Cyril Crabtree.

An announcement that has been received with great gratification is the appointment by H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, President of the College, of Sir Ernest Palmer, whose benefactions to music are almost beyond enumeration, to be a vice-president of the College in succession to the late Earl of Rosebery.

#### TRINITY COLLEGE OF MUSIC

By the death of Sir Wilfred Collet the College has lost one of its oldest and staunchest supporters. Beginning as a student in his young days he maintained his interest by later becoming a vice-president, and was a keen and regular attendant with his clarinet at orchestral practices.

For the first time, on June 29 last, the College combined the usual Queen's Hall orchestral concert with a distribution of College diplomas and prizes. Dr. John Warriner, Chairman of the Corporation, presided, and was supported on the platform by members of the College Corporation together with Prof. S. L. Loney, Chairman of Convocation, London University, who presented the diplomas and prizes. The Principal, Mr. E. Stanley Roper, gave a most inspiring address, which had a very cordial reception. Miss Havler received enthusiastic applause for a masterly performance of the Saint-Saëns's Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso.

By the performance of 'Monsieur Beaucaire' at the Scala Theatre on July 4, 5, and 6, the College Operatic Class, under the direction of Mr. F. Lloyd, assisted by Miss Maud Winter, achieved another remarkable success. When all carried out their parts so well it is invidious to single out any particular performer. At all three performances crowded houses showed great enthusiasm.

Michaelmas term begins on September 23 and will see some notable changes.

Mr. Joseph Ivimey has found it necessary to resign his appointments as conductor of the College Orchestra, and also that for the opera. Mr. Ivimey carries with him the affectionate good wishes of all. At the concluding performance of 'Monsieur Beaucaire' he was presented by the Principal with a handsome testimonial from the members of the company. Mr. Ivimey was also entertained to lunch by members of the College Board, and presented with a cheque as a tangible expression of good will.

The College is fortunate in obtaining the services of Mr. John Barbirolli, Musical Director of Covent Garden Opera and a former scholar of the College, as conductor of the orchestra. Mr. C. Kennedy Scott, conductor of the Philharmonic Choir, Oriana Choir, and Bach Cantata Club, takes charge of the College Choir.

At a recent meeting of the Board an important and far-reaching decision was made in connection with the Exhibitions granted annually by the College. These have been increased in number from thirty-one to sixty-six for Great Britain and Ireland; and from twenty-seven to fifty-two at the Overseas centres. Full particulars can be obtained from local secretaries.

#### THE ASSOCIATED BOARD

The fortieth annual meeting of the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music was held at the Royal College of Music, Prince Consort Road, S.W.7, on July 9. Col. Raymond W. Fennell took the chair.

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed, the Secretary read the report for the year. The number of candidates in Great Britain and Ireland was 7,920 in the Local Centre Examinations and 42,338 in the 'School' Examinations. The Exhibitions offered by the Board in Great Britain and Ireland during the year were gained by Dorothy K. Peacock, London (pianoforte), Edith M. Wright, Bangor (pianoforte), Violetta Yuill, Brighton (pianoforte), Margaret M. Reckless, Nottingham (violin), Rosemary Coppock, London ('cello), Megan Lloyd, Cardiff ('cello). Exhibitions were also awarded in the Dominions and Colonies as follows: In Australia, Edna Bickmore, Newcastle (violin), Miriam Hyde, Adelaide (pianoforte), Jean Pollock, Sydney (pianoforte); in New Zealand, Mary E. Martin, Greymouth (violin), Margaret G. McLeod, Havelock North (pianoforte), Thelma F. Willoughby, Wellington (pianoforte); in Canada, Fanny D. Dunsire, Nanaimo (pianoforte), Mike Kuczer, Winnipeg (violin), David Martin, Winnipeg (violin); in India, Blanche Herman, Bangalore (pianoforte); in Ceylon, Caryl E. van Langenberg, Colombo (violin); in Malta and Gibraltar, Olga Urso, Malta (pianoforte); in the British West Indies, British Guiana, and Bermuda, Dorothy B. Williams, Jamaica (pianoforte). Twenty-three Exhibitions gained in previous years have been renewed, twenty for a further period of one year and three for one term.

The Chairman, in moving that the report be adopted, referred to the much-regretted death of the Deputy-Chairman, Sir Anthony Bowlby, and to other losses sustained by the Board, and read the following letter from the Board's President, H.R.H. The Prince of Wales:

St. James's Palace, S.W.1  
'July 9, 1929.

As President of the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music I have heard with much satisfaction of the work the Board is doing, and I hope that in the coming year it may carry out its important musical activities at home and in the Dominions with increasing success.

(Signed) 'EDWARD P.'

This was a most encouraging message, for which the Board was deeply grateful. The Board's work continued to prosper both at home and abroad. That in the Dominions and Colonies had not shown a financial profit, but it was satisfactory to know that it was appreciated by all desiring a uniformly high standard throughout the Empire. A particular evidence of this was the great success in Australia of the Clubs of Licentiates of the Board, entry to which was much prized. At home it was the intention of the Board to make still further efforts to popularise its work of advancing musical education. An even closer contact would be established with schools and music teachers through the appointment of a special Organizer of Examinations, Mr. J. Malcolm Muir. The Board wished to encourage music in schools in every way, and would take all possible co-operative steps to this end. Already at the request of the Incorporated Society of Musicians it had issued a separate syllabus for the benefit of those hitherto using the now discontinued I.S.M. examinations, and at that of the Cambridge Syndicate had agreed to assist in holding their music examinations in India. This forward and constructive policy it would continue to adopt.

Dr. H. W. Richards, of the Royal Academy of Music, seconded the motion, and the report and balance sheet were unanimously adopted.

Sir Hugh Allen, Director of the Royal College of Music, speaking on the work of the Board, emphasised the fact that the Board was a fusion of the two Royal Schools of Music, the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, and was indissolubly connected with the distinguished musicians who were and had been members of them. Thus it brought the two schools into close relation with each other and enabled them to work together for the good of music. The great strength of the Board lay in the fact that its examiners were members of the two schools, and carried their name with them. To work for the Board was dignified and desirable, for the Board drew its authority from the schools and shared their prestige. Musical education here during the past fifty years had seen remarkable developments, and we were faced with a new set of circumstances. There was a fight. Were we to make our music or to take it? Music now was for the many. The noble task of the Board was now to see that it was properly used and dispensed.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman for presiding then terminated the proceedings.

The exhibitions offered annually by the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, which entitle their holders to free tuition at the R.A.M. or the R.C.M. for two or three years, have been awarded to the following candidates: Beryl Price, London (pianoforte), Gilbert Smith, Leicester (violin), and Eileen H. McCarthy, London (cello), at the R.A.M., and Joanna A. MacLeod, Oxford (violin), Ann S. C. Ram, Totland Bay (Isle of Wight) (cello), and Carl O. Lewis, Bournemouth (violin), at the R.C.M.

## London Concerts

### SOCIETY OF WOMEN MUSICIANS

New compositions and new arrangements were performed at the meeting of the members of the Society of Women Musicians held in the rooms of the Asiatic Society on July 6. All these novelties, showed a certain detachment, a desire to do things in an individual way, and to do it without setting forth on perilous adventures, which put to shame the work of some modern males. Of course, distinction is not the special attribute of either sex. None of the works performed suggested present or latent genius, although all revealed promise of better things to come. But the outstanding fact was the sanity of these women composers, who never seemed to lose sight for a moment of the chief realities of music—the reality of sincerity, the reality of clearness and logical exposition.

F. B.

### AUBYN RAYMAR

Few people seem to realise that Mr. Aubyn Raymar is one of that very small number of pianists who must be called geniuses. His playing is like no one else's; when he plays he creates an entirely new thing, even of a hackneyed work like Schumann's 'Etudes Symphoniques,' by the subtlety and power of his phrasing and by a very individual manipulation of tone. His virtuosity is uncanny, but not showy. He has that rare intuition which not only penetrates to the heart of a composer's music but at the same time re-creates it; interpretation of this kind comes near to pure creation. His playing is rather inhuman, and lacks the warmth of a great personality; it makes one feel as though the music were standing on its own legs in a vacuum, and the stock revelation of its nature is an experience we are not used to in our intimate art. He gave a recital at Grotian Hall on June 25, at which he played in his abrupt, dangerous, and masterly style a group of 18th-century clavecin pieces, the 'Etudes Symphoniques,' some attractive pieces of Medtner's, and a new Nocturne by Schelling, which turned out to be only Chopin brought up to date by a very modern improvement.

F. H.

### TRIO RECITAL

The trio recital of Madame Mathilda Verne, and Messrs. Ferencz Hegedus and Alexandre Barjansky on June 10, failed to give the satisfaction to the audience which a previous recital in June had given. Perhaps the players were not in the right mood; or possibly the music became them not so well. But the chief cause of trouble was the open lid of the pianoforte, which let loose such a mighty wave of sound that the string players were completely swamped. Madame Verne did her utmost to control the tone. But it is a well-nigh hopeless task. The modern 'concert grand' with an open lid is as dangerous as a motor car driven by a fiend. Would it not be wise to recognise this elementary fact? Even with the lid lowered the balance of tone is always in favour of the pianoforte, unless the strings are on the high register. If this is not done the only possible alternative is to multiply the string players. A dozen fiddlers and a dozen 'cellists would be just about equal to one pianoforte with the raised lid.

F. B.

### ORLOFF AND FACHIRI

One expected much from two such distinguished players as M. Orloff and Madame Fachiri, but it must be admitted that on this particular occasion neither the pianist nor the violinist came up to our expectations. The recital had an unhappy beginning. M. Orloff took the first phrases of the Franck Sonata at so slow and solemn a pace that the violinist could not possibly accept it and, at the same time, give to her melody the sweetness and fluency it requires. Madame Fachiri, in consequence, was forced to compromise; but she lost the key to the mood those first phrases establish so clearly and emphatically. But indeed throughout the recital M. Orloff showed none of the consideration for, and understanding of, the violin which is essential to a reasonable ensemble. In the Kreutzer Sonata his tone simply overwhelmed the violinist's.

F. B.

### MARK RAPHAEL

Mr. Mark Raphael won our gratitude for including in his programme a set of songs by Gustav Mahler which, although at present looked upon with some suspicion, well deserve to be widely known. So far only the big symphonies of Mahler have been heard in England, and there are some who hold that these do not show the best of his work. Mr. Raphael's experiment rather encourages this view, for the songs made a deeper impression on the public than any performance of the symphonies we remember in this country. The interpretation was intelligent on the whole, but Mr. Raphael's fervid style tended to turn the rich sentiment of the music into sentimentality.

F. B.

### ARTHUR ALEXANDER

Three novelties were introduced by Mr. Arthur Alexander at his recital at Wigmore Hall. The first was a Sonata-Saga by Freda Swan, a musicianly work, well-proportioned but inclined to be over-emphatic. One could never quite get rid of the impression that the composer was protesting too much. A 'Ballad' by John Ireland was much more convincing both in matter and in method. Opinions may differ as to the final value of Ireland's work, but there can be no questioning his deftness in writing for the pianoforte nor the maturity of his style. The same aptitude for the instrument could be seen in Mr. Alexander's own transcriptions, which showed, besides, respect and understanding of the spirit of the original works from which the arrangements were made.

F. B.

The very interesting and valuable collection of nearly two thousand books, &c., on Folk-Music, and old music generally, made by the late Frank Kidson, has been purchased by the city of Glasgow, and will be housed in the Mitchell Library.

At the last van Lier concert of the season, Mr. van Lier played an unaccompanied Suite for the 'cello by Dr. Hugo Lichtentritt, the new Berlin correspondent of the *Musical Times*. This was in four movements, all laid out in ample proportions. The most attractive was a dance measure in triple time, wherein the crisp phrases were bound together by firm rhythms. If the composer betrayed in this work no very personal style, he is clearly a fluent craftsman.

H. E. W.

JUDITH'

It is said at Hollywood that a successful film invariably makes use of these ingredients: religious uplift, snobbery, and sex appeal; and the shortest scenario which has ever been written to this formula was, 'My god,' said the Duchess, 'what legs!' Mr. Arnold Bennett has reduced the story of Judith to the same formula, with the addition of a murder to amplify it, and has handed it to Mr. Eugène Goossens to make into an opera.

The conflict between the God of Israel and His pagan enemy is the main theme; instead of the Duchess we have the Oriental Court of Holofernes; the legs of the Russian Ballet are there, and we have the seduction of Holofernes by Judith to lend further sex interest, while his murder by the same lady gives a good strong dramatic situation. So far, admirable; for we can have a soprano heroine whose varying passions give scope for coloratura, a contralto attendant to enunciate the obvious at the right places, a love duet, a ballet, an Oriental potentate who can rant and play the he-man, and a nice, modest baritone to be his victim. The only trouble about this perfect opera book is that it needs not merely music but the right kind of music. The right kind of music will be good, honest Italian stuff *à la* 'Tosca'. Mr. Eugène Goossens is not Puccini, nor would he be if he could; he is not a nationalist composer at all, but one of the cosmopolitans who are at all costs dry. 'Judith,' therefore, which was produced at Covent Garden in the last week of the Italian season, was an equal struggle between lush situations and music of the modern brand of perverse Puritanism. Neither budged an inch. Mr. Goossens's nearest approach to a compromise was an occasional purple patch of orchestration, but to any hint that he should become lyrical he answered a resolute 'Never.'

Even so the elements might have coalesced into an opera if the vocal writing had the prime requisite of all opera—character. The whole point of opera as an art form is that it conveys character in music and conveys to the listener the subtle interactions of personality which the participants in a situation can themselves only guess at. Opera is not a play with music nor an excuse for singing, but a study in character. Mr. Goossens's *dramatis personae* have no character whatever. Such characterisation as there is in the orchestra, and even there its more correct name would be illustration. 'Judith' begins well with a concise, bold theme to which a voice off (actually in a loud speaker in the roof which successfully conveyed the effect of a supernatural message emanating from nowhere) prophesied the downfall of the Assyrians.

Here indeed was the characterisation lacking elsewhere, and this theme was used as the leading-motive throughout the opera, and designed to give it unity. The character of Judith offered endless scope to the composer, since she has to be at once a Joan of Arc, a siren, an assassin, and a poor, weak woman. Madame Röta Ljungberg did her best with her monotonous *Sprechgesang*, but found the English tongue an added difficulty. Mr. Arthur Fear undoubtedly had the voice and manner, if not quite the presence, of a tyrant. Mr. Walter Widdop sang clearly as usual, but was a ridiculous figure, more like Siegfried with a beard than a Eunuch (the secondary sexual characteristics of eunuchs are usually supposed to lack virility). Miss Gladys Palmer fluttered vaguely as Haggith, the maid-servant of Judith, and Mr. Dennis Noble filled neatly the minor rôle of Achior, who sets the whole action in

motion by his counsels of prudence to the insensate Holofernes. The production was mounted with appropriate splendour, and Mr. Goossens conducted a satisfactory performance of this disappointing opera.

It is sad to have to write an obituary notice of yet another gallant attempt at creating a British opera. But facts are facts; the opera was still-born, and there is not likely to be any attempt at reviving that which never had any real operatic life in it.

F. H.

ROYAL ACADEMY OPERA WEEK

The annual performances by the students of the opera class of the Royal Academy of Music at the New Scala Theatre are now a recognised function during the summer season. This year three operas were presented, each work being performed twice during the week, in some cases with a change of cast. There is no doubt that the Academy is now a most efficient nursery for opera, as both Mr. Roy Henderson and Mr. Arthur Fear, who sang at Covent Garden during the season just concluded, bear conclusive witness.

The three operas produced were 'Rigoletto,' 'La Bohème,' and 'Merrie England.' The first was the least successful. 'Rigoletto' demands a lightness and sureness of touch that perhaps is not to be looked for in students. Mr. Julius Harrison, who conducted throughout the week, and was largely responsible for the all-round success of the undertaking, made a gallant effort to enliven matters by speeding up the tempi, but the much-wanted sparkle merely became a scramble. Miss Joan Coxon has a pretty voice, small but impeccable, and sang the Gilda music with much charm, and Mr. Bernard Cannon was surprisingly good in the difficult part of the Jester.

'La Bohème' was better. Puccini perhaps suffers less from a 'rough and tumble' than Verdi, and the casting was happier. The four Bohemians were distinctly good, the ensemble and gestures being remarkably effective, and again, the Mimi of Miss Jean Campbell Kemp was first-rate. She sensed, sang, and looked the character. The orchestral playing, too, was a distinct advance on the previous night. It was a pretty thought to give 'Merrie England,' for Sir Edward German was an R.A.M. student, and he, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and Sir Henry Wood were all interested spectators of the Friday night performance. On the whole it was a good performance, and yet this very English work was not as well done as the Franco-Italian 'La Bohème.' The choruses went well, and Miss Freda Townson as Jill-All-Alone redeemed the cast from mediocrity. She sings and acts well, and is worth the attention of some of our impresarios. The orchestral playing was patchy, heavy-handed instead of delicately Savoyard. But the week was full of interest to everybody having the cause of opera at heart, and its lessons will surely not have been in vain to its enthusiastic participants.

F. J.

LONDON FESTIVAL OF OPERA

Mr. Robert Stuart has engaged the New Scala Theatre, Charlotte Street, for three weeks, beginning on Monday, December 30, for an opera festival. The London Festival of Opera is intended to illustrate the development of opera from the time of Monteverde to that of Weber. In the first week Monteverde's 'Orpheus' and Purcell's 'Dido and Aeneas' (preceded by the Locke-Gibbons Masque 'Cupid and Death') will be given on alternate evenings. In the second week the stereotyped opera of the period of Handel and Mozart will be represented by Handel's 'Julius Caesar,' first produced in London in 1724, and 'La Finta Giardiniera,' composed by Mozart when a boy of eighteen. In the third week Gluck's 'Alcestis' will illustrate the period of transition when its great composer attempted with considerable success to escape from the conventions which made the art of opera ridiculous and undramatic, and in 'Der Freischütz' the London public will have the first opportunity for many years of witnessing Germany's

first and greatest romantic opera. All these operas will be performed in English, and special translations are being made where necessary.

The Festival will be followed by a week of matinée performances of 'Hansel and Gretel,' preceded by a light operetta by Gervase Hughes entitled 'Castle Greevey,' which met with considerable success in the provinces last year, but has not yet been produced in London. The conductors will be Mr. Aylmer Buesst, Mr. Leslie Heward, Mr. Gervase Hughes, and Mr. Jack Westrup. The producers include Mr. Dennis Arundel, Mr. Procter Gregg, Mr. Norman Marshall, Mr. Nugent Monck, and Mr. Robert Stuart. Among the artists already engaged are Mesdames May Blyth, Gwyneth Edwards, Doris Lemon, Marjorie Parry, and Denne Parker, and Messrs. Norman Allin, Arthur Fear, Charles d'If, Edward Leer, and William Michael.

Mr. Stuart has decided to call his company 'The London Opera Company,' and if the New Year's Festival is well received by the London public he hopes to give opera regularly throughout the winter months in London. Among the 'novelties' which he hopes to stage in the course of the year 1930 are: Glinka's 'Russlan and Ludmilla,' Monteverde's 'L'Incoronazione di Poppea,' Smetana's 'The Bartered Bride,' Rabaud's 'Marouf,' and Hindemith's 'Cardillac.' The last-mentioned work is considered in Germany to be the greatest of all 'modern' operas.

## Music in the Provinces

**HARROGATE.**—At the weekly symphony concerts Mr. Basil Cameron has been giving attention to new or little-known works by British composers. On June 13, Mr. Leslie Heward, besides playing the solo part in Mozart's D minor Pianoforte Concerto, conducted the first performance of his 'Nocturne' for orchestra. A week later Mr. Willoughby Walmisley played Dr. G. Coleman Young's Suite in F for pianoforte and orchestra under the composer's direction, and the programme included Mr. Herbert Bedford's tone-poem 'Hamadryad.' Edric Cundell's 'Serbia' was played on June 27.

**MANCHESTER.**—An interesting end-of-season concert was given on June 20 by the Manchester Contemporary Music Centre with a programme that included an early Violin Sonata by Honegger and Reger's String Trio, Op. 141b.

**WARWICK.**—Three performances of Holst's choral-ballet 'The Golden Goose' were given in the castle grounds on July 4-6 under the musical direction of Mr. P. J. Lees. Miss Grace Brittain took the part of the Princess and Mr. Gordon Smith that of Jack, the hero of Grimm's fairy-tale. Members of the Leamington Orchestral Society and the City of Birmingham Orchestra took part in the music.

### A NEW OPERA

The Birmingham and Midland Institute concluded the scholastic year with two performances of opera—Dr. Lyon's 'Storm Wrack' and Mr. C. M. Edmunds's 'The Blue Harlequin.' The first has already been played by the Carl Rosa Company, and, consequently, need not be discussed here again. Mr. Edmunds's work, on the other hand, was given for the first time, and aroused a good deal of interest.

It may be remarked incidentally that, in choosing for his text a little comedy drama by Maurice Baring, Mr. Edmunds has once more shown the attraction which fantastic subjects possess for the British composer. The point is worth noting, for I believe it to be of great importance to the future of British opera, which if it is to be of lasting value must reflect the genius of the race just as German opera reflects the German and Russian opera the Russian genius. It is, of course, impossible to inquire here exactly where national characteristics assert themselves and how. But it may

be said that while the dramatic literature of other countries possesses plays which in some way will stand comparison with the dramatic and the historic plays of English literature, there is nowhere else a play like 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.'

The resemblance between 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'The Blue Harlequin' is merely one of broad outline. All that can be said is that they both conform to the description of fantastic comedy. And Mr. Edmunds has treated 'The Blue Harlequin' as fantastic comedy, avoiding all temptation to revel in great climaxes and give a free rein to lyricism. His music appeals to us rather on account of the delicate and dexterous touches with which it underlines the action. It is never obvious, and it is never commonplace. It abounds in happy strokes not obtained by the use of a bold scheme of harmony in the Holstian way, nor by the lavish employment of folk-songs after the manner of Vaughan Williams. Mr. Edmunds's technique and outlook are both his very own.

When it is added that the play concerns a Policeman anxious to ascertain the colour of Harlequin's coat, a Clown and Pantaloons seeking not truth but sausages, and a Harlequin who pairs with Columbine, it will be easily seen that the success was never in doubt for a moment. Action and music proceeded harmoniously at a good pace, and when the curtain descended the spectator felt that the composer and the author won their battle—and won easily.

As regards the performance, all that need be said is that it lacked nothing needed to reveal the qualities of the opera. Undoubtedly a company of distinguished singers of experience would have driven certain points home with greater ease and effect. But the students of the Birmingham Institute did all that was necessary for complete success, and more than could be expected from young people who have not completed their studies.

F. B.

### THE HALLÉ SOCIETY

The thirtieth Annual Meeting of Guarantors of the Hallé Concerts Society, Ltd., was held on June 24, when the accounts for the 1928-29 season were presented. They show that in the past season the total number of concerts and recording sessions (Columbia) were six fewer than in 1927-28, although the recording appearances rose from five to seven.

What are termed 'Country Concerts' (including nine municipal ones for which the City Council makes a grant) were eight fewer than in the 1927-28 season, and receipts from these were down £1,050. The average receipts for sixty-six appearances of the orchestra in 1927-28 were (in round figures) £260, and for sixty during 1928-29, £274, the total number falling by six but average receipts rising by £14. The total income from all sources was down £62.

Sundry receipts were shown to be £144 more than in 1927-28, but whether this includes fees in respect of broadcasting is not revealed. Against this reduced income economies in expenditure were effected of substantially £700 on band and soloists. Curiously enough, the hire of the Free Trade Hall rose by £77, possibly due to an increased number of municipal concerts. The net surplus 1927-28 was £140; for 1928-29, £146.

The Pension Concert receipts go without deductions to that Fund, and last March yielded £340.

The full prospectus for next season is not yet available, but at the annual meeting Sir Hamilton Harty indicated that the 'Pastoral' Symphony of Vaughan Williams, along with some of the later symphonic work of Mahler and Sibelius, would in all probability be given. The choral concerts will be limited to three: 'The Messiah,' Berlioz's 'Faust,' and a miscellaneous one consisting of Harty's 'Mystic Trumpeter,' Kodály's 'Psalms Hungaricus,' and Rachmaninov's 'The Bells.' The following instrumental soloists have been engaged: Backhaus, Cortot, Orloff, Moiseiwitsch, Schnabel, Catterall, d'Aranyi, Szigeti, Suggia, and Cassado.

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## Music in Scotland

EDINBURGH.—The programme of a recital given by the Elizabethan Choir, directed by Mr. Percy Snowden, included Brahms's 'Liebessieder Waltzes' and the 1470 Ave Maria de Prés, announced as 'the first performance in Great Britain of the first choral work that is no longer archaic.'—Dr. Mary Grierson (pianoforte) and Miss Ruth Waddell ('cello) joined forces in a pianoforte and 'cello recital, which they repeated a few days later at Wigmore Hall, London.—The Scottish Chamber Music Players—Dr. Mary Grierson (pianoforte), Miss Gladys Clark (violin), Miss Maud Cowan (viola), and Miss Ruth Waddell ('cello)—at the last of their three chamber concerts (which, incidentally, closed the music season at Edinburgh) played Beethoven's E flat Pianoforte Quartet, Brahms's A major Pianoforte Quartet, and the Pianoforte Trio in A minor by Ravel.—As a result of a report by H.M. Inspector on visits paid by him to Secondary Schools under the Midlothian Education Authority, the Authority has decided to appoint, for the first time, two visiting music masters.

GLASGOW.—For several seasons past a small symphony orchestra, organized under the aegis of the Corporation of Glasgow, and conducted first by Mr. Horace Fellowes and later by Mr. Wilfrid Senior, has given a series of about twenty performances in the Glasgow Public Parks during June. This season a military band, recruited and conducted by Mr. John A. M'Ivor, was substituted with (perhaps necessarily) less satisfactory musical results. The annual 'Parks' performance of 'The Messiah' was given in Kelvingrove Park bandstand. Mr. John A. M'Ivor conducted a choir of two hundred voices, and the orchestral accompaniments were provided by the military band referred to.—Sir Thomas Beecham recently gave an invitation luncheon at Glasgow for the purpose of stimulating local subscriptions to the Imperial League of Opera, in which Glasgow has shown so far a singularly lukewarm interest. At the luncheon a local committee was formed (a method which has been urged on the Imperial League of Opera for the past two years) and an intensive campaign set afoot. Concurrently, the Covent Garden Opera Syndicate announced an autumn season of opera at Glasgow (and at Edinburgh and Aberdeen), with a possibility of a further season in the spring. To bring Glasgow within the scope of the Imperial League's scheme another fifteen hundred subscribers are required. Apart from the futility of launching a propaganda campaign in the month of June, the double-crossing of the League's campaign by the Covent Garden Syndicate's announcement, whether accidental or intentional, cannot but be seriously detrimental to it.—On the occasion of his retirement, Mr. Hugh Hunter, who for the past twenty-five years has been a visiting music master in Glasgow day-schools and has interested himself in other directions in the musical life of the city, received a parting gift from his colleagues and friends in the Glasgow Education Authority.

## Music in Wales

CARDIFF.—Slow but encouraging progress has been made with the League of Opera, and a committee has been organized to canvass the neighbourhood in order to get a large representative membership.

CARDIFF AND SOUTH WALES GENERALLY.—An urgent attempt is being made to complete a fund, started before the war, for the erection of a memorial to Evan James, the weaver who wrote the words of the National Anthem of Wales—'Hen Wlad fy Nhadau' ('Old Land of my Fathers')—and his musical son John James, who composed the tune, which was written one Sunday afternoon in January, 1859, and completed by both men on the same day. It is intended to put up two life-size bronze figures, symbolical of Poetry and Music, on a suitable base, with medallion portraits

of the author and composer, from the designs of Sir W. Goscombe John. The site proposed is in Ynysangharad Park.—The fate of the National Orchestra of Wales is being much discussed at the present time. Suggestions have been made for following Manchester's lead by endeavouring to form an endowment fund. Meanwhile Cardiff is proposing to make a contribution towards maintenance, and other towns in South Wales are considering a similar step, for it is felt that the disbandment of the orchestra would be a very serious loss to the musical development of the whole of Wales. The British Broadcasting Corporation has been a great stand-by, and the wide range of the programmes has been a valuable educational experience. Though the orchestra has mainly served Cardiff hitherto, it is intended to be available for all parts of the Principality. It has paid visits to one or two places in the Distressed Areas in order to help in the social and educational work there, and has assisted at choral and orchestral concerts in neighbouring towns. A schoolmaster at some distance away reported not long ago that one of the ardent youngsters in his school orchestra went off to Cardiff on purpose to hear Boccherini's Minuet. Coming back, he set to work to copy it out in manuscript from a pianoforte arrangement in order to learn how to write a minuet. This is only one instance of the educational aspect of the work, and the music students at University College, Cardiff, find the N.O.W. concerts a very valuable addition to their studies.

LLANELLY.—The proclamation of the Gorsedd took place at Park Howard on July 2, when a robed procession, preceded by the town band, went to the Gorsedd Circle in the park and next year's Eisteddfod was proclaimed with the usual formalities and the singing of the Gorsedd Prayer antiphonally by a Druid and the assembled people.—In the evening the National Orchestra of Wales gave a concert of popular classical music in the Market Hall, which was crowded with an enthusiastic audience. Towards the close of Edward German's Welsh Rhapsody the people all rose to their feet and cheered wildly. The conductor said afterwards that he had never had such an experience.

PONTYPRIDD.—On June 12, in the afternoon, Sir Walford Davies addressed a meeting of unemployed miners at the local cinema, which was used as a lecture hall. The audience consisted mostly of young men. They listened with intensity to a fairly technical lecture on the nature of music, with various illustrations on the pianoforte. They had come straight from the queue receiving unemployment relief.

THE RHONDDA VALLEY: TON PENTRE.—On the evening of June 12 Sir Walford Davies addressed a meeting of men, women, and children. Very small boys flocked round near to the lecturer with apparent eagerness. Fortunately Miss Heale had brought a violin and a 'cello, and her illustrations were followed with rapt attention. It was obvious that there was the greatest possible need for an organized ministry of the mind.

GENERAL.—On June 19 a joint meeting of representatives of local Eisteddfodau (organizers and adjudicators) and of the National Council of Music took place at Shrewsbury under the chairmanship of Mr. S. J. Evans of Llangefin. It was decided to form a Federation of Local Eisteddfodau under the title 'Undeb Eisteddfodau Cymru,' and, on the motion of Sir Walford Davies, a small executive committee was appointed to draft the constitution of the new body. Several matters of reform were discussed, among them a regularly organized time-table, the appointment of technically competent adjudicators for instrumental competitions, and the publication of lists of suitable test-pieces. Considerable discussion took place with regard to money prizes, and, although no resolution was taken, the example of the recent Children's Eisteddfod at Corwen was quoted with much approval. It was resolved that a letter of congratulation be sent to the promoter, Mr. Ivor ab Owen Edwards.—On June 20 a meeting between representatives of the

Welsh Folk-Song Society and the National Council of Music took place under the chairmanship of Dr. J. Lloyd Williams, when plans were discussed for mutual co-operation. Sir Walford Davies expressed himself as favouring the publication of a collection of Folk-Songs in their pure melodic form, for unaccompanied singing, and in simple vocal arrangements with and without accompaniment for harp (or pianoforte), and instrumental arrangements for harp solo, or strings with harp accompaniment.

The Welsh Folk-Song Society was founded at the Carnarvon Eisteddfod, some twenty-one years ago, as a result of the energetic efforts of Dr. Lloyd Williams, and began under the presidency of Sir William Preece, the famous electrician, on whose death Dr. Mary Davies succeeded to the presidency. Among the sponsors and supporters were Sir Harry Reichel, Mr. Alfred Percival Graves, and Mrs. Gwyneddion Davies, whose labours have been assisted by a small band of enthusiastic collectors.

## Musical Notes from Abroad

### BERLIN

#### A NEW HINDEMITH OPERA

The festival weeks in Berlin were partly dealt with in last month's issue. The remainder demands present notice. Hindemith's new opera, 'Neues vom Tage,' splendidly produced under Klemperer's direction, is a product of modernism that could not have occurred in any country but Germany. To understand the mentality upon which so curious a work is based one must know that the young generation at present monopolising the field of action is cleverly taking advantage of a favourable situation by giving a certain artistic aspect to its primary purpose, which is popular success and good business. Powerful drama is of secondary importance in up-to-date German opera. A sensational scenic make-up is the main point. Burlesque and parody are fashionable; vulgarity is an approved objective; nonsensical action is favoured; the genre of grotesque operetta, of revue, is being transferred to the opera houses. The low taste of the greater public is being flattered by every possible means. At the same time prophets of the new faith are loudly proclaiming the artistic importance of these ways and means.

Krenek and Weill, the two favourites in the race for popular favour, find a new competitor in Hindemith. His chances, however, of beating his rivals are not very considerable, for he cannot forget his better self completely enough to write the music really asked for by his libretto. It would be hardly worth while to describe the plot in detail. It is merely a series of comic and grotesque situations. The grand climax is the discovery of the heroine in her bath by an ardent admirer. Among the scenes represented are a museum in which a statue of Venus is smashed by a jealous husband, a quarrelling couple breaking plates at breakfast, an office with typists singing in chorus, a prison cell, and a vaudeville theatre with performing acrobats. Such a scenario called for light, crisp, and cheeky music, devoid of artistic pretensions. Hindemith has written a score full of ingenious counterpoint abounding in fugues and canons, variations, elaborate choral work, and long set pieces that never come to an end when they should, so that the singers are often embarrassed by having to wait until the orchestra has finished its symphonic fantasies and variations. As a piece of musical workmanship the score is in many respects admirable, with its abounding fun and its strange and interesting sound-effects, but it has hardly any relation to the libretto. This opera, concocted by a strange couple, Marcellus Schiffer and Paul Hindemith, is certainly a curiosity.

The Diaghilev Ballet recently gave the Berlin public an ample opportunity of judging its merits. There is no doubt that these Russians are pre-eminent in the art of dancing, but however their skill and discipline

may impress us, there is a feeling that they have departed from the familiar Russian tradition without securing any artistic gain. They cannot boast of solo dancers equivalent to stars like Pavlova, Karsavina, or Nijinski. Their style of dancing is in a way orchestral, being limited to an ensemble art of high perfection. This ensemble style attaches less importance to grave and expressive, emotional power than to acrobatic feats, to a form of sport, a rather mechanical virtuosity in the bodily representation of geometrical figures. In one at least of their ballets the pure art of dancing was triumphant; the famous Polovetz Dances from 'Prince Igor' were rendered with an overwhelming passionate frenzy, an electrifying vitality of rhythm and of motion. The remainder of their two programmes was based chiefly on Stravinsky's ballets. But of these it was not the early works that were chosen, with their splendid rhythms and colours, but the later problematic experiments. 'Apollo Musagetes' proved thoroughly disappointing in its affected simplicity, its barren melody, and its dryness of sound. It is an unhappy attempt at reviving the French classic ballet of Louis XIV., with Lully as model.

'The Nightingale' proved of little interest as a ballet. The omission of the singing not only makes the pantomime hard to understand but deprived the music of its essential melodic outlines, leaving a merely ornamental design that fails to interest the listener's ear after a while. In another respect 'Le Sacre du printemps' is disappointing as a dance-pantomime. Here the pure scenic action, overlaid with mysterious symbolism, bears no relation to the orgiastic fury of the music, which in fact is very much more impressive when heard in the concert-hall without the tiresome mimetic accompaniment. Prokofiev's ballet, 'The Prodigal Son,' belongs to the very fashionable type of 'motoric' music, kept intentionally expressionless in imitation of the mechanical rhythm of machinery. In this inanimate genre Prokofiev, however, is a virtuoso, and the fatalistic run of his merciless rhythm, the cold splendour of his colours, are not without a certain impressiveness. Another variety of the *dernier cri* in music is revealed in Henri Sauguet's 'La Chatte.' Hearing the music of this quite unknown composer, one is tempted to consider him an imitator of the early Beethoven, a contemporary of Meyerbeer; one further believes that this very melodious and somewhat old-fashioned music has been newly orchestrated by some skilful musician of our age who has added a few pieces in the genre of 1928. We learn, however, that Sauguet is a living French composer, born twenty-six years ago, and that in these simple and melodious tunes we may observe the influence of Stravinsky's latest reactionary and classicistic pose. This is already being imitated by a school of young Parisian composers, and it seems destined to become the very newest kind of 'snobisme.'

Of all the new ballets produced by the Diaghilev troupe Vittorio Rieti's 'Le Bal' was the most agreeable to listen to, owing to its straightforward, simple melodiousness, its youthful and unaffected manner, and its well-balanced form. Rieti has certainly no radical and revolutionary tendencies, but his sound talent ranks him high among young Italian musicians. Ernest Ansermet was in charge of all the performances.

'Titus,' written in the same period as the 'Magic Flute,' has always been one of Mozart's least-known operas. Nobody ever heard it, and people have come to look upon it as a very weak work. Under these circumstances one must give special credit to the Berlin State Opera for giving it a place in the Festival performances. But even on this occasion they did not venture to give a scenic representation, and Mozart-lovers had to be content with a concert performance, conducted by Erich Kleiber. It is true that the conventional libretto of Metastasio, written expressly for an imperial coronation and used by Mozart for the same purpose, hardly invites consideration from a dramatic point of view. Yet it would certainly be interesting to see what Mozart achieved in the genre

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of Italian *opera seria*, already obsolete at that time, and to form a judgment one would have preferred a stage performance. Compared with 'Figaro,' 'Don Giovanni,' 'The Magic Flute,' the music of 'Titus' is less abounding in melodic inspiration. Certain portions, however, like the Finale of the first Act and Vitellia's scene in the second Act are equal to the best music ever written by Mozart. Moreover, it must be remembered that even Mozart's mediocre music is always art of high perfection and always worth hearing.

#### FURTWÄNGLER

Wilhelm Furtwängler has acquired international celebrity as a symphonic conductor; in fact, even in Germany one seems to have forgotten that he started his career as an opera conductor some twenty years ago. Owing to Bruno Walter's sudden departure from his Berlin post, the question of Walter's successor has become urgent, and thus it happened that we twice had the rare pleasure of seeing Furtwängler at the conductor's desk in the Municipal Opera House. Both in the 'Marriage of Figaro' and in 'Tristan and Isolde' Furtwängler gave most convincing proof of his mastery also of the operatic style, and of his thorough acquaintance with theatrical problems. The 'Tristan' performance was especially memorable owing not only to Furtwängler's admirable art, but also to an ensemble of high perfection, combining singers like Frida Leider, Sigrid Onegin, Lauritz Melchior, Friedrich Schorr, and Alexander Kipnis.

Klemperer conducted a Stravinsky programme with the personal assistance of the composer, who played his own Pianoforte Concerto in a very sober, but clean and finished manner. Stravinsky has so far reserved this Concerto for himself as a pianist, but it would be in fact rather surprising to see pianists competing for the honour of playing it, and the Master's monopoly strikes one as a wise act of precaution. The theories expounded here of the pianoforte as a percussion instrument, of unsentimental, expressionless tone, do not become much more attractive by being coupled with Bach imitation, jazz, and parodic intentions. The rather mixed style of the problematic Concerto, however, is sweet music compared with the dryness, tediousness, and affected simplicity of the music of 'Apollon Musagetes' in a very lengthy arrangement for string orchestra. 'Les Noces,' the closing piece of the programme, must be counted as among Stravinsky's best and most striking works. The musical description of a Russian peasant wedding shows Stravinsky in his happiest mood, writing naturally out of his Russian soul, less occupied with astute and sensational whims than he has been during the last decade. 'Les Noces' made a no less powerful impression at Berlin than it did at Geneva last spring.

HUGO LICHTENTRITT.

#### HOLLAND

An accident which turned out to be more serious than was originally thought upset all the plans for the first half of the season at Scheveningen, while at the same time, in the variety of conductors who have appeared, it provided us with new interests. Carl Schuricht was the immediate victim of this accident, but it was at first hoped he would be able to take up his duties as principal conductor in the second week. Meanwhile van Anrooy was engaged for the opening concert. Neumark was allotted an extra number of concerts, and Rudolf Siegel, General Music-Director at Crefeld, came for a couple of concerts. The continued illness of Schuricht caused the engagement of van Anrooy for a second concert, this time with Kreisler as soloist, and of Rhéné-Baton, a former conductor at Scheveningen, for three concerts, after which Hans Weisbach, Schnéevoigt's successor at Dusseldorf, took over the reins until the end of July. For the second half of the season the appointment of Abendroth stands.

There has not been very much of outstanding character in the six weeks which have passed since the opening. One of the most gratifying events was the perfect accompaniment by the Residentie Orchestra and Dr. van Anrooy to Kreisler's solo work in the

Beethoven Concerto. The soloist himself was in his happiest mood, which is generally the case when he plays this work, but I have never under any conductor heard a more perfect accompaniment and seldom one which was the equal of this. Siegel was generally a disappointment, though personally I found his reading of the Beethoven No. 8 more than ordinarily interesting. Contrary to those of van Anrooy, his accompaniments (with Margaret Matzenauer as soloist) were casual and unsympathetic, and his performance of Schubert's 'Unfinished' was also unfinished. It was pleasing to hear Rudi Stephan's 'Music for Orchestra,' written as long ago as 1913, but the satisfaction was rather a melancholy one, for the performance suggested more what the ill-fated composer might have done had he lived than any actual great achievement.

Other individual works of exceptional interest have been performed on 'amateur' evenings. Chief of them was Richard Strauss's 'Die Tageszeiten,' of which the choral parts were sung by the 'Haghe-Sangers,' an excellent male-voice choir of about a hundred voices under Louis Boer. The military methods of the conductor—he is bandmaster of the Royal Military Band—were occasionally somewhat severe for such a work, and still more so for the Schubert and Brahms works which filled the rest of the programme. Absolute correctness and a remarkable grasp of the intricate rhythmic problems presented, however, gave a true idea of the composer's music. Curiously, the work was being performed the same evening at Rotterdam by Rotte's Mannerkoor, which was celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary, under Bernard Diamant.

The Hague Amateur Orchestra, under F. E. A. Koberg, also at the Kurhaus, has given a particularly praiseworthy performance of J. S. Bach's Concerto in C minor for oboe, violin, and strings, with Jaap Stotyn and Willem Brederode as soloists, and also of Saint-Saëns's unsymphonic first Symphony.

An unusual and pleasing programme under Rhéné-Baton consisted of C. Ph. E. Bach's Symphony in D, Boccherini's Concerto in B flat (the first movement is much less satisfying than the others), Tchaikovsky's Variations on a Rococo Theme (the soloist in these two works being Emmanuel Feuerman), Berlioz's 'Carnaval Romain' Overture, and Ravel's 'La Valse.'

Utrecht has just completed its Summer Festival under Evert Cornelis, and the summer concerts of the Concertgebouw Orchestra at Amsterdam are continuing under various conductors. The programmes in both cases are largely familiar.

The production of the *farce lyrique* 'Protée' of Paul Claudel and Darius Milhaud by the Groningen University Students' Dramatic and Musical Societies, on the occasion of the Lustrum Feast, was an event of interest for various reasons. The poem was completed and published as 'Poème d'Été' as long ago as 1913, at which time Milhaud sketched the music but did not complete it. In 1916 there seemed a chance that the work would be produced in a Parisian circus, and Milhaud thereupon completed the score, but the production was indefinitely postponed. Three years later the Théâtre de Vaudeville accepted it subject to alterations necessary to fit it for the stage, but before this production could take place the company went bankrupt. In 1926 Claudel tried to adapt the work to the music-hall, but without success. The combination of classical legend and satire on present-day life made it eminently suitable for the combination of learning and jollity which marks the Dutch University feasts, so that the Groningen celebration was an excellent opportunity. For this the 1919 version was chosen as the most suitable.

The students, under the stage direction of Adriaan Hooykaas and the musical direction of Kor Kuiler, entered thoroughly into its spirit, and there was some very good acting and playing. The drama is as graceful and piquant as one expects from a French author, even though, as is the case, he happens also to be Ambassador at Washington. The music is more varied in quality,

and while generally it is a worthy companion of the words, in the purely instrumental numbers it is Milhaud at his most cerebral and mechanical. It was a useful and interesting experiment, and generally a successful one, but before the work is put on the professional stage (which it should be at no very distant future) it is to be hoped that M. Milhaud, who was present on this occasion, will take the score in hand and re-write the less satisfactory portions.

The Concertgebouw arrangements for the winter season are now announced, the chief of which are that Mengelberg will conduct the first concerts up to and including October 24, and will take up the reins again on March 2. Meanwhile Monteux will act as permanent conductor, Bruno Walter and Hermann Abendroth appearing as guest-conductors. At the first concert, on September 26, Cortot will be the soloist, and other soloists engaged include Rachmaninov, who will play the solo part of his second Pianoforte Concerto, Eily Ney, Mischa Elman, José Iturbi, Paul Hindemith, Walter Gieseking, Lotte Lehmann, Feuermann, and Piatigorsky. With the assistance of the Amsterdam Toonkunst Choir a concert performance of Saint-Saëns's 'Samson et Dalila' will be given, and for the chamber concerts the Vienna, Guarneri, and Léner Quartets have been engaged. Elisabeth Schumann will give a recital representative of German *Lied*, and Vera Janacopulos of that of France. **HERBERT ANTCLIFFE.**

#### ITALY

##### THE FUTURE OF LA SCALA

Although there could not be any doubt as to the future of La Scala, recent events indicate distinctly rosy times ahead. In the first place the finances have been looked into, and the Mayor, Marquis de Capitani, who is also President of the Ente Autonomo of the Scala and of the Lombardy Savings Banks, has arrived at a very deft scheme for guaranteeing the necessary capital to cover the losses and ensure the safe working of the organization. The proposal was submitted to the Minister for Home Affairs, who is perfecting a provision whereby the City of Milan will become provisional proprietor of the boxes through the granting of a loan of some seven and a half million lira. This sum will be used for the expropriation of the boxes and for carrying on. By this means the bank is covered and the City is the virtual owner of the theatre.

In the second place, the new Ministry has consented to the proposal of Maestro Lualdi, a musical member, for the forming of a 'Permanent Orchestra and Chorus of the City of Milan and the Scala Theatre.' This reduces enormously the costs of the theatre, and provides the masses necessary, at the same time improving very considerably their quality. For it is a patent fact that the individual members of both those organizations are at present not of the best. Exceptionally good players will not take jobs with the Scala orchestra for the simple reason that they are too badly paid. Under the new arrangement both choristers and players will be under contract for twelve months in the year.

#### MILAN

The programme of orchestral concerts has been continued by Giorio Polacco, Fritz Reiner, and Fritz Busch.

Polacco's was the first of these, his programme including the three pieces by Pizzetti from the Suite 'La Pisanella,' by D'Annunzio, the 'Eroica,' and three pieces by Jaques Ibert, those entitled 'Escale,' new to Milan. They did not evoke admiration, the material used in their construction lacking both in invention and development—shortcomings that brilliance in orchestration did not compensate.

Fritz Reiner was warmly remembered by a public that recalled his brilliant work of two years ago. He gave the first performance in Milan of Respighi's 'Gli Uccelli,' a suite derived from early music of English, French, and Italian sources. It was received with much greater enthusiasm than it deserved; nor was its obviousness generally perceived. The C major Toccata arranged (or perhaps it would be more correct

to say orchestrated) by Weiner, did not win absolute approbation. It cannot be admitted that, notwithstanding the good taste evident in the transcription, the original form is not preferable. The Brahms variations on a theme of Haydn's were happily treated, but not greatly appreciated.

The programme chosen by Fritz Busch was much more sober in design, and one which left him no opportunities of personal display. His work was serious and sincere, and aroused admiration. The Mozart Concerto introduced Rudolf Serkin as soloist.

Busch's interpretation of the Brahms third Symphony might have been called tame were it not so purely correct. Reger's two Musical Poems, which form the second and third of a Suite of four woven about as many pictures by Boeklin, roused genuine applause, as much for the innate fineness of their content as for the splendid reading of the conductor.

The 'St. Matthew' Passion was given by the Gemischter Chor of Zurich, under the direction of Andrae, comprising four hundred and thirty-five voices, augmented by thirty boys of the Milan Duomo and sixty others from the Schola Cantorum of Treccate. The soloists were Mihacek, Durigo, Erb, Kloos, and Löffel, and the version that of 1740. This was the second time that the Passion has been given in Italy, the first being by the same choir and the same conductor in the Milan Conservatory on April 22, 1911.

This concert virtually closed the activities of the Ente Orchestrale del Teatro alla Scala for this year, the only other concert being that of the Scala chorus, directed by Victor Veneziani.

The entry of this body into the concert field is notable, and a sure indication of greater refinement being introduced into their theatrical work. Their performance did not compare with the efforts of choirs accustomed to this class of music (a fact observed also by the Milan press), but it was felt that they should be encouraged to continue. The programme contained works by Fara, Sinigaglia, and Pratella of the late 4th and early 5th centuries, Monteverdi, and Palestrina.

CHARLES D'IF.

#### A CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM OF ROSSINI

(From the 'Lady's Magazine' of April, 1818.)

An opera entitled 'The Barber of Seville,' from the pen of Signor Rossini (*sic*), a young living composer at Rome, has been produced here for the first time in this country. High expectations were entertained of it, especially as it had been performed with great success at various theatres in Italy; but we were among those who thought that the author's having taken up an opera to set to music, which had already been composed by so fine a master as Paisiello, was not a piece of ambition in the best taste, or a very promising symptom of excellence. We expected that we should find little genius exhibited, at least on the score of sentiment; and we conceive that we were not disappointed.

In neither of these main qualities will Signor Rossini's opera, in our opinion, bear any comparison. We should be loth to speak so decidedly after only one hearing; but what renders an opera most delightful, and makes one recut to it over and over again, and grow fonder on acquaintance, is a succession of beautiful airs; and of these the new 'Barbiere di Siviglia' appears to be destitute. We do not recollect one. The passages most resembling them struck us as being traceable to Haydn, Mozart, or to Paisiello himself; and the recitative is singularly bad and commonplace. An intelligent daily critic notices, we observe, the resemblance to Haydn of 'Zitti, zitti, piano, piano,' the most favourite passage in the opera. On the other hand, the piece is not destitute of merit, or even, considering the author's youth, of great promise, though not on the higher sides of genius. Its good qualities are a sort of sprightly vehemence, and a talent for expressing oddities of character. He excels in the more hurried parts in general—the entrance of

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the Count in the disguise of a singing-master, the groans of old Bartolo, and the scene where Figaro and his master have so much difficulty in getting rid of a set of fellows who have a prodigious pertinacity. We never met with a composer who gave us such an harmonious sense of discord, who set to music with such vivacity what is vulgarly called a 'row.'

The rest of the opera is of a piece with this kind of talent, not good in the graver, more sentimental, and graceful parts, but exceedingly promising in the ardent, vehement, and more obviously comic. The general effect is inconsistent. Sometimes, for instance, there is hardly any accompaniment, sometimes a numerous one; sometimes the stage is all in a bustle, and sometimes unaccountably quiet. One feature is particularly worth notice, which is that the young author, in a sort of conscious despair of a proper quantity of ideas, dashes his crotchetts about, as it were, at random; and among a number of grotesque effects gives now and then a fine hit. He resembles, in the latter respect, the ancient painter who, in a fit of impatience at not being able to express foam at the mouth of a hound, dashed his sponge at the animal's jaws, and produced the very thing he despaired of.

#### BEETHOVEN'S BELGIAN ANCESTRY

In 1868, Chevalier Léon de Burbure, in his article on Beethoven contributed to the 'Biographie Nationale de Belgique,' upset the views of an anonymous writer of 1837, who sought to claim the great master as of Dutch origin. (*En passant*, I may remark that the late Cardinal Newman invariably called Beethoven 'the great Dutchman.') De Burbure based his views as to Beethoven's ancestry by reason of the fact that a certain Guillaume van Beethoven had been established at Antwerp and was the father of Henri-Adelard, master tailor, at Antwerp (1683-1745). The latter's child, Louis, born in 1712, became a singer at St. Pierre, Louvain, then drifted to Bonn, where he entered the Chapel of the Prince-Bishop and became the father of Jean van Beethoven, the father of the master whose centenary has recently been celebrated. This genealogical tree furnished by de Burbure has been followed by Grove, Thayer, Prod'homme, and others, but it has been proved to be based on a confusion of two persons of the same name. M. André Pels, of Antwerp, in a recent search discovered that Henri-Adelard van Beethoven of Antwerp had twelve children, one of whom was christened Louis, who died as a child, but the twelfth child was also christened Louie—a not uncommon occurrence. The latter child, called Louis-Joseph, born in 1712, became singer in the Collegiate Church of St. Rombaut at Malines (Mechlin), and was the grandfather of Beethoven.

The question, however, of where Louis van Beethoven was born remained to be solved. This Louis was 'the dear grandfather' whom the great master loved, although, at the death of the former, Beethoven had only entered his fourth year. Fortunately, a Belgian musicologist, M. Raymond van Aerde, a native of Malines, who is librarian and professor at Malines Conservatoire, has made the important discovery that Louis van Beethoven, born in 1712, and singer at St. Rombaut's, Malines, was the undoubted grandfather of the immortal Beethoven, and thus Malines can claim the honour of being the birthplace of Louis van Beethoven. M. van Aerde has written a work on the whole subject, meticulously documented, but his discovery is another feather in the cap of musical Malines, which can also claim to have been the ancestral home of de Rore and Philip de Monte. A résumé of his discovery is given by M. Ernest Closson, of Brussels, in the *Revue Pleyel* (September, 1927).

W. H. G. F.

The Tufnell Park Orchestral Society has vacancies for a few string, wood-wind, and brass players. Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays, at 8, in St. George's Church Rooms, Carleton Road, Tufnell Park. Hon. secretary, Miss Alice Tibbs, 76, Carleton Road, N.7.

## Obituary

We regret to record the following deaths:

TERESA ARKEL, in Milan, on June 30. She was one of the greatest teachers of singing of this generation. Born in Poland a little over sixty-nine years ago, she started her musical studies with her sister, Fanny Blaumfeld, a pianist of note. At the age of eleven she was already giving her own concerts, and continued to do so until her marriage, when she was seventeen, to Dr. Sigmund Arkel. She then studied singing under Pauline Viardot Garcia in Paris, and, after singing in France, Germany, Bohemia, Russia, and her own native country, in as many languages, she went to Italy, and shortly after became known as the greatest Wagnerian soprano there. She sang at La Scala for twenty years, making occasional appearances in Spain and South America. While in the former country she was frequently received at Court, and indeed enjoyed a certain intimacy with the Queen, who, as is well known, was fond of music. Some of the best-known artists of the day have been pupils of hers, and many teachers of singing, Canadian and American, came to her regularly every summer. Her death was the result of an illness which covered a period of more than ten years, and caused her intense suffering at times. She was, however, able to teach until a few months ago. Her loss will be very keenly felt, for she was one of the gentlest and most sincerely good women it is possible to know. Many students received free training (and even food as well) from her. It is impossible to overestimate the value of lives such as hers, full of labour and achievement. She was one of the few remaining exponents of the so-called old Italian School which began its decline towards the later half of last century.

C. D'IF.

HERBERT WALTON, at Bournemouth, aged sixty. He was born at Thirsk, Yorkshire, studied the organ under Dr. Naylor, York Minster, and at eighteen won a three-years' open scholarship at the Royal College, where he worked under Parratt, Parry, and Frederic Cliffe. He became private organist to the Earl of Aberdeen, and was appointed later to St. Mark's Church, Leeds, and thereafter, thirty years ago, to Glasgow Cathedral, where his annual autumn series of organ recitals became for many years a popular feature of Glasgow musical life. A brilliant executant, he was inclined to flamboyancy in his treatment of the Church service, and was at his best as a soloist. Hence he was much in demand as a recitalist throughout Scotland, and further afield. Two years ago he made a recital tour of the United States. His services were often in request as adviser and expert in specifications of new organs and renovations.

EUSEBIUS MANDYCZEWSKI, at Vienna, aged seventy-one. One of the last survivors of the Brahms circle, he has substantial claims to enduring fame as one of the best of editors, having been responsible for excellent editions of Haydn, Brahms, and Schubert. He did valuable work also in connection with the archives of the Society of Friends of Music, collecting and collating MSS. and letters of Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, &c. A pupil of Nottebohm, he composed and conducted with success.

ARTHUR G. CLAYPOLE, Mus. Doc., at Derby, on June 30, aged forty-seven. Until recently he was organist at Derby Cathedral.

The Premier Prize of the London Violoncello School has been won by Susie Thomas, of Dulwich, and the Junior Prize divided between Sarah Nelson, of Winnipeg, and William Pleeth, of London. Miss Beatrice Harrison adjudicated.

